





Present to Manuel
Garcia y Aello by
his friends

Robert Henry
Petersburg Va
Ch



James M. Smith
Sept 10 1844
St. Louis

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Sept 10 1844
St. Louis

A
MODEL



FOR
YOUNG MEN;

OR,
The Edifying Life

OF
CLAUDE LE PELETIER DE SOUSI.

Translated from the French of Abbé Progart,

BY

THE REV. EDWARD PEACH.

If thou followest justice, thou shalt obtain her; and shalt put her on as a long robe of honour, and thou shalt dwell with her; and she shall protect thee for ever; and in the day of acknowledgment thou shalt find a strong foundation.—*Eccles. xxvii. 9.*

O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones.—*Matt. xi. 25.*

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DEDICATION

TO

Masters Henry and Francis Turle.

THE beautiful model of christian piety, which I have the pleasure of presenting to you in an English dress, will I am confident, recal to your mind the reiterated exhortations which you formerly received from my mouth, and to which you listened with every testimony of delight. It was my happy lot to be intrusted with the care of implanting in your minds the first seeds of piety and learning: the soil was good; I scattered, I watered, and with inexpressible satisfaction I witnessed the rapid increase. The task of bringing to maturity these promising appearances is now intrusted to abler hands; but my solicitude is not entirely removed on that account: for, although your present situation enables you to receive every advantage which instruction and example can confer, you are nevertheless exposed to perils and dangers of the most for-

midable description. You are now arrived at the most important, and, at the same time, the most volatile stage of life. Now it is, that your mind is forming either to virtue or vice; now it is, that the tree is assuming the shape which it will ever after retain: this is the age of which the wise man speaks, when he says: *A young man according to his ways, when he is old he will not depart from it.** But, as the greatest watchfulness and attention over the corporal frame is required at a time when the individual himself is the least susceptible of such attention, so, in the formation of the mind, the powers of the individual are the weakest at the time their exertion is most required. The understanding, the chief power of the soul, remains generally unemployed during the greatest part of the day; as it is no longer delighted with the acquisition of the first rudiments of learning which flattered it in infancy, and is not sufficiently mature to derive pleasure and satisfaction from the rules of grammar and composition, to which you are obliged to apply. If, however, you feel not the satisfaction in study which is requisite

* Prov. xxii. 6.

to engage your affections, the time allotted for that purpose, will appear dull and uninteresting. Here then lies your danger; for, as the heart of man, in youth as well as manhood, is obstinately bent on the pursuit of enjoyment and ease, and invincibly averse to restraint, if study be not a pleasure, it will become painful; your affections will consequently be alienated from it, and the dread of worse consequences will alone provoke your application. The restraint under which this forced application will lay you, will increase your ardour for self-gratification: your thoughts will be incessantly fixed on the beloved objects of your affections as sports and pastimes; and the increasing concupiscence of corrupt nature will stimulate you to seek a still farther indemnification in the secret indulgence of a vice from which no one can debar you. If it should be your misfortune to yield to these repeated attacks, you will in a short time contract a distaste for prayer, and the service of God, and be thus deprived of your only weapons of defence; and, in all probability, by the time that your understandings have come to

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maturity your passions will have taken root beyond the powers of eradication.

Therefore, although you enjoy the benefit of every species of instruction and example, in addition to the good dispositions which you possessed from your childhood, you remain still exposed to the greatest dangers; and I should ill deserve the testimonies of friendship and regard, which you express for me, were I to remain a silent, or listless spectator of your combat. Then receive this tribute of anxious solicitude from a friend, and put it to that important use for which it was intended. It contains the history of a young man, who exhibited a display of the most heroic, most consummate virtues during that period of life which is the most replete with dangers, and the least calculated to resist them, during that period of life to which you are now arrived, and in the same employments in which you are engaged. It will be your interest to inquire, by what means this young man rose superior to the weakness of his age: the perusal will inform you, that it was by true and sincere piety. Piety taught him to reflect at leisure on the mercies and love of God; re-

flection exercised his understanding; and exercise brought that power to perfection in youth, which in general is attained only in manhood. This maturity of understanding enabled him to extract pleasure and satisfaction from the otherwise, dull rules of grammar and composition; and the love of God, which was the main spring of all his actions, incited him to apply with unwearied diligence to every task, without any distinction of what was irksome or agreeable, but because such was the will of Him whom he desired to please. The same sincere piety likewise created in his soul a horror of the least offence, and impelled him to labour for the acquisition of every virtue which would make him more agreeable to his beloved. Piety, therefore, was the source from which he drew every blessing; piety formed him into that amiable model of duty to God, to his parents, to his neighbours, and to himself, which is delineated in this work. The same source remains open likewise to you. The perusal of his life, I am confident, will create the most salutary reflections in your mind: you will reason thus with yourselves, and say: "Certainly it is my interest

God, and certainly the enjoyment of God must be infinitely superior to the enjoyment of created things; for the pious soul can live secluded from the society of men, and amidst the greatest poverty be supremely blest; but the society of men, nay, the whole world itself, can never satisfy the human heart without God.

Such are the reflections which the perusal of this work will suggest to you; and, if they be permitted to sink deep into your mind by deliberate consideration, they will incite you to model your conduct according to his example during this your most important stage of life. Thus will the labours of the translator be repaid, and a gem added to the crown (if a crown be the happy portion) of

Your most affectionate,

And most devoted friend,

EDWARD PEACH.

THE MODEL OF YOUNG MEN.



INTRODUCTION.

GOD, who wills the salvation of all men, has provided for every state of life the means necessary for attaining it; the most efficacious of which, his more immediate graces alone excepted, are the models of virtue which we have constantly before our eyes. Infancy and youth have their models, as well as mature and old age. There is not a society, not a house of education, and, I might almost say, not a family, in which God has not had his chosen servants. And therefore, when the Saviour of the world shall enter into judgment with the sons of men, he will clearly justify his providence, and confound the pretexts of sinners who have incurred his severest punishments, by displaying before them the glory of his saints—of men, who, in the same age, and in similar circumstances, or perhaps in circumstances less favourable, have constantly practised the duties of a christian life, and been faithful to the same graces which they have either neglected or abused.

God is essentially good, and he chastises with regret; his mercies therefore extend yet farther in

favour of those who deviate from the paths of rectitude. Since all eternity is open to him, wherein to exercise the rigours of his justice, he endures their iniquities with patience, and lavishes his mercies on them here below. In addition, therefore, to the numberless good examples, by whose silent voice he incessantly calls after those ungrateful children who fly from him, his paternal providence also, from time to time, raises up some chosen souls, whose virtues shine with superior lustre, and are calculated to excite their attention in such a manner, as to make them reflect on their own conduct, and form a comparison between their irregularities and the exemplary lives of his saints.

I do not however wish to infer that this source of mercy flows in favour only of the sinner, who too frequently is not benefitted by it. If God, by these moving examples, calls the sinner to repentance, he likewise by the same voice invites the just to greater perfection; and the bright character, whose life I here propose as a model of virtue to all young men, ought in a particular manner to excite the emulation of the more virtuous, and confirm them in the ways of piety.

To the just, therefore, as well as to the followers of corrupt nature,—to youth in general, I propose the example of the *virtuous Sousi*. I propose to all, who, like him, apply themselves to the study of literature; I propose it to all, who frequent colleges, and more especially to young students who reside in seminaries and ecclesiastical communities, and are called to the sacerdotal dig-

nity, because they are required to possess a higher degree of perfection than the generality of young men.

With a confidence, therefore, bordering on conviction, I trust that this select class of young men will receive the greatest advantage from the model which I propose to them, and will be most disposed to make every effort to walk in his footsteps. It certainly can be no presumption on my part to hope, that young ecclesiastics will endeavour to imitate the virtues of a young laic; there can be no impropriety in wishing and praying to God that those youths who are assembled under the auspices of religion, and in the very porch of the temple, removed from the dangers and scandals of the world, would hear and practice the lessons of wisdom which are delivered by a youth living in the midst of the world, and in the circles of the first rank. Yes, it is with pleasure, my dear reader, I flatter myself that the perusal of this small work will inspire you with the same sentiments which actuated the great St. Augustine, while as yet wavering in his irresolutions: "Behold," said he, "the illiterate and even the weaker sex taken heaven by violence: and thou, with all thy learning and genius, what art thou doing? Wilt thou never have the courage to imitate the virtue of those whom thou surpassest in abilities?" Such, I trust, will be your language likewise: "Behold a youth," you will say, "has sanctified himself in the midst of the world, cannot I do the same in a house consecrated to piety? He sanctified himself in the rank of a common laic,

cannot I take courage, and do the same in the house of the Lord, I who am his minister? He sanctified himself amidst the dangers of wealth and opulence, cannot I do the same in a state less exposed to those dangers? He consummated the work of perfection at the age of seventeen, cannot I take the resolution to begin, at least, to labour seriously for salvation, I who perhaps have already attained that age?"

It gives me pleasure when I reflect that this work is intended for the perusal of youth of a regular education; and that the greatest part of my readers will be exempt from the weakness attendant on ignorance:—young men who have been already instructed, and of whom the majority will be blessed with happy dispositions, and unpolluted minds. A well disposed mind is brisk in its perceptions, and this vivacity of sentiment inspires it both with constancy in resolution and energy in action. Although a good disposition is not necessarily the most acute, yet it is generally the most prudent and judicious. A young man of a well disposed mind, who adheres strictly to the principles of truth, will uniformly draw the same practical consequences. What has once appeared to him true, will appear so always. With mature deliberation, he compares time with eternity: he knows what he is permitted to do for the one, and what he must necessarily do for the other. If he seek after wisdom, it is not the wisdom of the world which puffs up; if he searches after happiness, he seeks it not on earth; if there be any whom he is afraid of displeasing by his con-

duct, they are not the dissipated and vicious among his companions, but the *great God*, who alone is the judge both of virtue and vice. A young man, whose disposition corresponds to ~~this~~ description, will, with the pious Bishop of Amiens*, be convinced, that when God in his mercy raises up saints in our own state of life, we are not to make them the objects of a fruitless admiration, but endeavour to walk in their footsteps by an imitation of their virtues.

It will undoubtedly be satisfactory to my readers to find that the virtues and sentiments of this young man are described by himself, in his epistolary communications with his intimate and confidential friends; and that they, on their part, relate every thing they have either seen or heard concerning their virtuous acquaintance. The memoirs, from which I have composed this work, are carefully preserved in the library of the great seminary of St. Sulpicius, and the superiors of that house made use of them for the edification of the young ecclesiastics entrusted to their care. With the desire of procuring the same advantage for the youth of the whole kingdom, the Abbé Emeri, superior-general of the congregation, communicated them to me, and requested that I would pre-

* Louis Francis Gabriel d'Orleans de la Motte, one of the greatest ornaments of the church in the 18th century, was born at Carpentras in 1683, and advanced to the See of Amiens in 1783. Being a perfect model of all virtues, and an enemy to pomp and splendour, he lived like the lowest of his clergy, in poverty, and in want even of the common conveniences. He considered himself as the steward only of his revenues, the greater part of which he distributed to the poor, as to the right owners. After a long life spent in the practice of the most heroic virtues, he died at the age of 91, in the year 1774. See his life by the Abbé Proyart

pare them for the press. I have done it with pleasure; and they who have read the manuscript, will find that I have omitted nothing in the present publication.

Some perhaps may regret that such an edifying and affecting life was not sooner presented to the world; but Divine Providence, who is ever attentive to dispense his benefits according to our necessities, undoubtedly reserved this great model of virtue for the time when young men would be surrounded with the greatest scandals. Our youth therefore ought to be more sensible of the special favour of kind Providence, and make him a suitable return by their eagerness to profit by it. History informs us that the sacred bodies of the martyrs, after they had lain concealed in the bowels of the earth, were discovered and solemnly removed amidst the acclamations of the faithful, who were witnesses of the stupendous prodigies which were wrought on those happy occasions. Let us in the same manner hope, that it was the design of God this edifying life should remain so long unknown, only that it might become a more abundant source of grace to those who shall have the advantage of perusing it.

Although the whole collection of christian virtues seem in a manner united, and to form but one in the breast of him who possesses them, nevertheless, in order to form some regular plan in this history, I have divided it into three parts, and shall describe in succession the edifying manner in which this young man fulfilled the duties of that triple justice which every christian owes to God, his neighbour and himself.

PART FIRST.

CLAUDE le Peletier-de-Sousi, born at Paris in the reign of Lewis the Fourteenth, an æra fruitful in prodigies of every description, was the youngest son of Claude Peletier, Comptroller General of the Finances. As he took the name of *Sousi*, from a manor belonging to his father, and was generally distinguished thereby in his own family, I will so designate him in the course of this his history. His father was a man, not only of learning, but incorruptible probity. During the time that he was *Provost of Trade**, he immortalized his memory by the construction of the famous quay in Paris which bears his name. He was likewise President a Mortier†, Counsellor of State, and successor to the great Colbert in the department of finance. In these different offices, and even in the last, he had the happiness to unite to the esteem of his prince the approbation of the public. He was intimately connected with the great men of his time, who had distinguished themselves either in the magistracy or literature. At court his friends were the Cardinal d'Estree‡,

* An office in Paris, Lyons, and other towns: this title was given to the chief officer of the town house, who had a limited authority over the burghers.—Trans.

† The Chancellor of France and the Presidents of Parliaments were distinguished by this name, on account of a black velvet cap edged with gold lace, which they wore on days of ceremony as a mark of dignity; the first President had two borders of gold lace.—Trans.

‡ Cardinal d'Estree, son of the Duke d'Estree, Marshal of France, born anno 1623, and raised to the See of Laon in 1653, was employ-

Bossuet, and particularly the Duke de Beauvilliers*, Fenelon, and the pious and learned Abbé Vittement†.

To the qualities which are necessary to form the patriot and statesman, Claude le Peletier likewise united the virtues which constitute the true Christian. This great man considered religion as his first duty; and even when his public duties pressed hardest upon him, he never permitted a day to elapse without assembling his family and domestics to public prayer.

He was the father of four sons, the eldest of whom (Louis) was appointed President a Mortier, and, like his father, distinguished himself as a religious and enlightened magistrate; Michael, the second, Abbot of Joui in the diocese of Sens, and afterwards Bishop of Angers, was a learned and virtuous prelate; Maurice, the third, of whom we

ed in many arduous negotiations at the court of Rome, in which he manifested great prudence and abilities. He was not only well versed in the affairs of both church and state, but remarkable for his charity to the poor. He died anno 1714.—Trans.

* The Duke de Beauvilliers was a man of great learning, and particularly qualified for the education of a prince, as his principal concern was to instil into his pupil a love of mankind, and a desire of making them happy. He died anno 1714.—Trans.

† L'Abbe Vittement, of the town of Dormans in Champagne, a man as equally remarkable for his profound learning as his solid piety, was Professor of Philosophy and Rector of the University of Paris, when Louis XIV. from an intimate knowledge of his abilities, nominated him sub-preceptor of the royal princes. The Duke d'Anjou his pupil, being called to the throne of Spain in 1700, took him in his suite and offered him the Archbishopric of Burgos, which he refused: upon his return to France, being nominated sub-preceptor to Louis XV. the Duke of Orleans, the regent, could not prevail upon him to accept either an abbey, benefice, or a place in the French Academy. The Abbe Vittement to this uncommon disinterestedness united the most uncommon modesty, which is ever the distinguishing characteristic of true merit.—Author.

shall hereafter have occasion to speak more fully, refused a bishopric in order that he might devote himself to the education of young clergymen in the congregation of St. Sulpitius; the youngest was Claude le Peletier-de-Sousi, whose life I now present to the public.

The children of so virtuous and enlightened a parent could not fail of receiving the best education. M. le Peletier appointed the *Abbé Leger*, a worthy clergyman, their preceptor, who afterwards accompanied his pupil Michael to the See of Angers, and was much esteemed by him on account of his prudent and pious counsels. Of the four brothers, the two elder went to college; the two younger, *Maurice* and *Sousi*, remained at home, and frequented the university in their higher classes only. The preceptor had entire authority over his pupils; the father reserved to himself the right only of judging from time to time of their progress in the languages. No one could be more capable of this task than the worthy magistrate, who read Demosthenes like Cicero, and employed his leisure hours in addressing elegant and embellished Latin descriptions to his friends of the country residence which he inhabited.

The preceptor, so ably assisted by the father, guided his pupils as he pleased. Maurice, the most difficult to govern, being of a brisk and impetuous disposition, applied himself to study with an unwilling mind; but, as we shall see in the sequel, he was at length, by the example of his younger brother, converted to a regular and de-

vout life. *Sousi*, ever docile to all the lessons he received, manifested a particular disposition towards the exercise of works of piety. No sooner were the charms of virtue displayed before him, than he became enamoured therewith, and elevated himself wholly to it; and when arrived at an age to be sensible of its advantages, he emulated the happiness of those who reduce it to practice. This appears to have taken place about his thirteenth year, when he made his first communion; for, at that age, he is described as possessing every amiable qualification.

I pretend not to attribute to him any merit on account of the common gifts of nature and the graces of person, so often fatal to the possessors by their abuse of them; but we may certainly admire them in one who constantly paid homage to his Creator. Virtue which often appears in more ungrateful forms, seems to have chosen in the person of *Sousi* a temple worthy of itself. His exterior was engaging:—sweetness and modesty were seated in his countenance;—his eyes seemed to express the candour of his soul;—every thing,—even his hair, which was particularly beautiful, tended to increase the comeliness of his person, which was inferior only to the beauties of his mind.—This description of his person is given by one who was intimately acquainted with him*, his words are; *elegantis formæ et cultissimi ingenii, adolescens*—a young man of an elegant figure, and of the most refined talents.

* *Bevin's History of Claude le Peletier, in 4to.*

It was an important point that so promising a youth should be placed under the guidance of a person who was capable of nourishing the precious germs of piety which began to bud forth in his soul: this Providence seems to have attended to, when it inspired his father to appoint for the director of his conscience a man in every respect capable of such an office; this was Mr. Polot, the superior of the great seminary of St. Nicolas, whose piety and learning had gained him the esteem, as well of his congregation as of the university. *Sousi*, under his direction, made, in a short time, great progress in the ways of salvation. His happy inclinations, as he advanced in age, bloomed into virtues, which were brought to maturity by the prudence of his director, who with the same prudence prevented them afterwards from degenerating into excess.

The prospect of his first communion excited more serious reflections in his mind, than he had hitherto made; he then formed resolutions to correspond with the inestimable blessings for which he was preparing, and in them he displays a wisdom superior to his age. He seemed to think that he had lost the benefit of his existence during the whole time that he had lived, either in the ignorance or the imperfect practice of his christian duties. He reflected on the days of his childhood, only to beg of God to forget them. Penetrated with love and gratitude for a God who visited his heart with the superabundant sweetness of his presence, he saw in his past actions and conduct crimes and offences sufficient to call forth contin-

ual sighs and tears. The bright light which the Holy Ghost infused into his soul, threw the darkest shade on those trivial faults, which appear so excusable in tender age, and represented them as heinous crimes. We shall find that his greatest failings were sentiments of vanity, distractions in his prayers, and attachment to his own opinion. These were the principal faults he proposed to correct, and which formed the most considerable part of his general confession. He considered his first communion as the basis, and, as it were, the corner-stone of his salvation; and he was convinced, that if he had the happiness to perform it well, he should have the happiness likewise to persevere in virtue. He was not deceived, for the hopes of the just man are never confounded.

His immediate preparation for this great sacrament corresponded with the virtuous sentiments which inflamed his heart; and the abundant fruits which he immediately received, and the strongest proofs of the holy dispositions wherewith he approached the sacred table. If at any time the humble youth spoke to his friends of the time which preceded or followed his communion, he always said, *before or since my conversion*; and it might be truly said, that his first communion was the epoch of his conversion, if not from vice to virtue, at least from the weak virtues of infancy to the most solid piety.

From the time that *Sousi* had the happiness of being united to God in communion, his whole thoughts were turned to the means of being for ever united to him by grace; and so powerfully

did heaven correspond with the holy desires of his heart, that from the day of his precious union till his death he appears never to have offended Him by the least wilful transgression. His whole conduct, as exposed to the view of his family and companions, from that moment exhibited an uninterrupted series of good actions and edifying virtues. We will begin by transcribing the resolutions which the spirit of God suggested to him on that occasion, and which formed his invariable rule of conduct. The paper which contained them, after the death of *Sousi*, fell into the hands of one of his friends, the Abbé de Flamanville, of whom we shall have frequent occasion to speak, who transmitted it to the seminary of St. Sulpicius. During the perusal, I beg the reader to consider that they were suggested by the reflections of a youth of *thirteen*.

RESOLUTIONS made by *Sousi*, and written by *himself* after his *first conversion*.

“Having, by the grace of God, made a general confession of all the sins of my life, and having asked pardon for them in the best manner I was able, although very imperfectly, I make the resolution of entirely reforming my conduct, by putting off the old man, and to that intent,

“1. I will labour with more diligence than I have hitherto done; in the great affair of my salvation; and for that purpose I will frequently meditate on death—on the judgments of God—on heaven, and on hell.

“2. I will purify my soul to the utmost of my

power from all the sins to which I feel myself particularly inclined, and of which I am most frequently guilty; such as vanity, distractions in my prayers, and attachment to my own opinion. I will always entertain the lowest opinion of myself, and will frequently recall to mind the manifold offences I have committed, that I may thereby nourish in my soul the sentiments of interior penance. I will reflect likewise, that if the mercies of God had not preserved me, I might have fallen into those grievous sins into which so many others have fallen, who were less deserving of such a misfortune than I was.

“3. When I pray, I will reflect that the angels and all the powers of heaven tremble in the presence of him to whom I address my supplications. I will consider that he is present before me;—that he hears me;—that he knows my thoughts, and will one day demand of me a strict account of all that I entertain during the time of prayer.

“4. I will always prefer the advice of my superiors to my own; I will sacrifice to them my own opinion, and endeavour to make my will entirely subservient to theirs, because they know better than myself what is proper for me. I will as cheerfully execute their injunctions, as if they were the commands of God, and I will encourage myself to fulfil this duty with fidelity, by the example of Jesus Christ, who was obedient even unto death, and who always did the will of his Father in preference to his own. As often as I transgress this resolution I will give an Alms to the poor.

"5. I will never speak in company without necessity, but will keep myself as much as possible in the presence of God, and entertain myself with some good thought, particularly death, judgment and eternity.

"6. I will express a satisfaction when I am reprimanded for my faults, but never when I am applauded. If I be rebuked, if a bad interpretation be put on my actions, I will not exculpate myself. If the reproofs I receive be founded, I will endeavour to correct myself; if they be not, I will offer the humiliation to God, who suffered so many injuries, so many calumnies and reproaches in his silence, although he was innocence itself. It shall be my constant practice to be mild and complaisant to all without exception.

"7. In school I will never speak without necessity, and I will be as attentive as possible to the lessons and instructions of my master.

"8. During the day I will often raise up my thoughts to God, and will implore the protection of the B. Virgin.

"9. I will often reflect on the happiness of heaven, and will recall to mind, from time to time the pious lecture which I read in the morning and at noon.

"10. I will endeavour to excite myself to love God more and more, by the consideration of what his Divine Majesty is entitled to, and by the remembrance of his goodness and mercy to me.

"11. I will endeavour to unite myself to him, to commune and converse with him as often as possible, reflecting that out of pure love he has

united his body with mine, that he watches incessantly over me, and is always thinking on me.

"12. I will endeavour to make myself perfect ; and to gain greater power over myself in order to correct my faults, I will dedicate my whole heart and soul to God, who, in his mercy, has given his whole self to me in the holy communion, although I deserved it so little.

"13. I will excite in myself ardent desires of death, through the pure motive of being more perfectly united to my God, and of attaining a situation where I shall never offend him more. I will fix all my desires in heaven, considering that I was made for God, and not for the earth :—for the next world and not for this.

"14. I will faithfully fulfil all my exercises of piety, without omitting one.

"15. I will endeavour to recite the rosary with greater devotion than I have hitherto done, and will excite myself to a still greater confidence in the Blessed Virgin, considering her as my tender mother, and most powerful protectress before the throne of God.

"16. As it will be difficult to fulfil all my resolutions unless I employ my time to the best advantage, I will rise as early in the morning as possible, and this at a stated hour, if circumstances shall permit.

"17. I will give my first thought to God, by an act of profound adoration, and my first action by making the sign of the cross. After cloathing myself, I will, without delay, withdraw into my closet, as if I were summoned to give to God an ac-

count of the actions of my whole life. I will take holy water, and kneel down;—I will say my prayers, recite my spiritual lecture, and make some reflections.

“I will consider, for example, that this day may perhaps be my last; that God has given me it for the purpose of being employed in the great affair of my salvation, and that consequently I ought to spend it to the best advantage. I will consider how delighted I should be, had I spent it well, and how sorry if I had lost it, if, as possibly may be the case, it should be my last. After this, I will make, in the presence of God, resolutions to fulfil the exercises of that day with all the fervour in my power, as if they were to be the last of my life. This point I will be careful never to omit.

“I will forecast in my mind the occasions of sin which may present themselves to me during the day; and having discovered them, I will make resolutions, and take precautions not to be overpowered by them.

“I will consider how unhappy I should be if on that day I should fall into sin; and will remind myself that I may probably commit the most enormous crimes, and that perhaps the Devil is compassing my destruction, and is asking permission of God. On which account I will conceive the greatest diffidence in myself, and solicit God to preserve me from sin. I will put myself under the protection of the B. Virgin, St. Joseph, and my Angel-Guardian, whose assistance I will frequently invoke. I will then offer my studies to God, and apply myself to them during the time that I remain in my closet. 9*

“18. I will persevere in my studies with the pure intention of pleasing God, whose will it is that I should be thus employed; and, during my application to them, as well as during the rest of the day, I will raise up my heart frequently to him.

“19. I will employ my time in the best manner possible, reflecting that life is short, and that we have not a moment to lose, since we have none in which we may not merit an increase of happiness for eternity. If God should grant to a soul in hell one minute of the time which we lose, in what manner would he employ it? I will dwell upon this thought.

“20. After mass, which I will hear with the utmost fervour and devotion in my power, I will return to my room, and make my particular examination of conscience on my knees; I will then read a chapter in the New Testament, some sentences of which I will endeavour to retain in my mind, and reflect on them during the course of the day; and, as occasion serves, I will practice the particular duties they inculcate.

“21. I will endeavour, by acts of self-denial, to restrain my will, and, in all things, to mortify my senses, viz. the eyes, ears, tongue, feet, taste and smelling.

“22. About seven o'clock at night, after the regular hour of study is elapsed, I will recite the remainder of our Lady's Office, and make my spiritual lecture. If there be any time remaining before supper, I will resume my studies, after offering them to God by a short prayer.

“23. After night prayers, I will retire to my

room, and upon my knees I will thank God for preserving me during the day ; I will humbly crave his pardon if I have been so unhappy as to offend him ; I will make a resolution to confess my sin as soon as possible, and, by the grace of God, never to be guilty of the same for the future ; I will then put myself, as I did in the morning, under the protection of the B. Virgin, St. Joseph, my Angel-Guardian, my Patron, and St. Bernard, and humbly solicit their assistance.

"24. I will retire in silence to rest, and before I compose myself to sleep, I will offer my last thought to God by an act of adoration, and my last action by resigning my heart to him and making the sign of the cross. Before I close my eyes, I will reflect that perhaps I may never more awake, and I will endeavour that this consideration shall make a deep impression on my mind.

"25. I will read over these resolutions every Sunday, and will renew, in the presence of God and the B. Virgin, my determination to observe them faithfully. If at any time I transgress in any point, I will either give an alms to the poor, or impose on myself some other satisfaction, which I will faithfully perform."

In these resolutions we find nothing respecting his confessions and communions, the reason of which may perhaps have been, that the best rule he could follow would be that which his director should prescribe, whose counsels he always considered as commands, and which he observed as scrupulously as if they had been delivered by God himself. However, we shall have occasion

to observe that his confessions and communions were frequent, and that the latter were more so than the former; a permission which a prudent director never grants to a young man, unless he can confidently rely on his piety, but more especially on his humility.

The rule of life which we have transcribed, announces in its pious author, not only a nice discernment, and mature judgment, but likewise an ardent desire of sanctification; the spirit however which dictated it, may be discovered in the manner in which it was observed. This rule was not the effect of a temporary fit of devotion, which in a short time decreases, and frequently becomes extinct, when the exterior helps of instructions and exhortations, which excited it, are discontinued. There are, I believe, few young people well instructed, who, at the epoch of their first communion, during the exercises of a retreat, and on the point of fixing on a state of life, do not feel in themselves some desires of salvation, and turn their thoughts to the means of insuring that important affair. There are many likewise, who, on that solemn occasion, after the example of *Sousi*, draw up a plan of conduct adapted to their situation in life; but experience unhappily proves, that the number is comparatively small who follow it with the same fidelity as this virtuous youth. And why this difference? Because the greater number of young people, not being accustomed to reflect on the great truths of religion, give more time than usual to prayer and meditation when they prepare for their first communion; this, united with con-

tinued exhortations and instructions, excites in their souls lively desires of serving God with fervour; but when the great act is compleated, their prayers become less frequent, and as they have not the benefit of the same exhortations, their desires gradually cool, till by degrees they fall into their former state of tepidity and darkness.* But

* Young people, who are inspired by God with the desire of applying in earnest to the great affair of salvation, cannot be too sensibly convinced of the difficulties attendant on the first commencement of a life of piety. The first invitations of God to a holy life are usually accompanied with a lively idea of the importance of salvation, and a foresight of the interior pleasures which virtue imparts. Like a tender father, he exhibits before the eyes of his children the rewards he has prepared for them, in order to arouse them to exertion, and excite their ambition. Of these pleasures however he grants only a foretaste at the beginning, and this foretaste he grants, not as a reward, but as an earnest of that future happiness which their correspondence to his graces will infallibly procure.—It is invariably the order of Divine Providence to withdraw these first sweets, and subject the soul to trials, of greater or less magnitude, in proportion to the consolations she has received. Then the soul is left at full liberty to choose either a life of piety or of worldly pleasure. She has experienced both, and on the choice she shall then make will probably depend her future misery or happiness.—When therefore a young man begins to taste the sweets of piety, let him prepare his soul for temptation. His first fervour will be quickly succeeded by a disrelish for the things of God; an aversion both to spiritual and other duties, and a more than ordinary ardour for sports and amusements. Now it is that he must offer violence to himself, and in spite of the opposition arising from these temptations, strenuously labour to fulfill the duties which he had fulfilled during his first fervour. It is undoubtedly an arduous task for a young man to fight against his own inclinations, or force himself to perform diligently, exercises which give him no pleasure, and put a restraint on amusements which are his only delight. But let it be, on the other hand, considered, that this trial will continue for a short time only; the grace of God will become his strength, and after a few victories, his former fervour will return, and an increase of spiritual delights will amply reward him for the violence which he offered to self-love. I would therefore advise every young man, not to impose on himself a multiplicity of good works during his first fervour, as by this means, he would multiply his duties, and consequently increase his danger in the time of trial, for, if he neglect them during that time, it is more than probable that he will never have strength and resolution sufficient to undertake them again, but to confine his resolutions to the exact performance of his duties, and

Sousi stood not in need of such borrowed helps, his piety took its rise in an enlightened and lively sense of religion; he knew how to avail himself of the extraordinary assistance of the church but did not depend solely upon it. On this account he was never subject to those vicissitudes of fervour and lukewarmness, which too often in young people terminate in a total indifference for salvation.

Sousi, at the time of his first communion, resided at home, and had not, like other young people in public schools, the benefit of repeated instructions, nor, what perhaps is a more important advantage, the benefit of edifying examples, and of models calculated to encourage him in the pursuit of virtue: but his piety and ardent love of God made ample amends. Being convinced of the necessity incumbent on every Christian of fulfilling the Gospel precepts, as well in every stage of life as in every place, he became a model of virtue in his youth, and in the midst of the world. God, however, who disposes every thing necessary for the salvation of a faithful soul, becomes himself the support

of those spiritual exercises only which are enjoined him by his spiritual director, or by the rules of the college. By this means he will be exposed to less difficulties during the time of trial, and will with more ease obtain the victory over self-love. After he has regained his former fervour, and enjoyed the exquisite reward due to his exertions, he may then add to his resolutions; he may impose on himself an obligation to study at times when he was not required; to perform some additional exercises of piety, and to approach the sacraments more frequently. Let him, however, be always guided by his director. After he has enjoyed the sweets attendant on constancy to these resolutions, he may then impose farther obligations on himself. In this manner he may proceed from virtue to virtue, till he has attained the perfection of sanctity.—*Trans.*

and guide of him who seeks him with sincerity of heart. A short time after his first communion, Providence offered him a means of strengthening himself in his good dispositions, from which he drew every possible advantage. His brother, *Michael le Peletier*, was nominated to the abbey of Joui, and made it the place of his residence. During the vacations, the Abbot of Joui invited to the convent his two brothers, *Maurice* and *Sousi*, together with a friend, the *Abbé de Flamanville*, with whom he had been formerly acquainted at the seminary of St. Sulpicius.

This Abbé de Flamanville, a young man of a distinguished family in Normandy, was remarked both for his talents and for his regularity of conduct in the seminary where he then resided. At this time he felt a secret desire of becoming a member of the society for the propagation of the gospel among infidels under the name of *foreign missions*; he had actually formed the resolution: but the designs of Providence having opposed an obstacle to his departure, he was consecrated *Bishop of Perpignan*, formerly the capital of Rousillon, but now of the department of the Eastern Pyrenees, in the south of France. His promotion to the episcopacy did not abate the ardour of his zeal. During the visitation of his diocese, he discovered in the country the poor gardener, who expressed to God the affections of his heart in the prayer which is so well known by the name of the *Gardener's Pater noster*, *Our Father*.

The Abbé de Flamanville, who was the intimate friend of the Abbot of Joui, in a short time discovered the merits of *young Sousi*, and endeavoured to form an intimate connection with him. He became wonderfully delighted with the exemplary piety which appeared in *Sousi*, who was young and a laic; and *Sousi*, on his part, felicitated himself on the discovery of a friend who was initiated in holy orders, and filled with the true spirit of his vocation, and who would serve him as an enlightened guide in the paths of christian perfection to which he aspired. They loved each other with the tenderness of brothers, and mutually adopted this appellation of affection in their letters. We are indebted to the Abbé de Flamanville for the greater part of the materials which compose the life of his virtuous friend.

This valuable acquaintance was not the only profit which *Sousi* reaped from his first visit to the abbey of Joui. As this house was noted for regularity of discipline; the retirement, silence, labour, prayer and public duties of religion were to him sources of the greatest edification. So much indeed was he affected, that notwithstanding the pious life he led, he thought he had as yet done nothing for heaven, when he witnessed the virtues which were practiced by the most perfect among the members of that house; I say the most perfect, for it was *their conduct* alone he examined. These he endeavoured to imitate; and his fervour was equal to that of the most exemplary novice.

The superiors of the convent were edified by the sight of so much piety in so tender an age; they admired *Sousi*, and considered his abode among them as a particular blessing. In a short time they gave him the full liberty of the convent; the pious young man took advantage of it, and attended the religious in all their exercises. Being informed that on certain days of the week they assembled in chapter in order to accuse themselves publicly of the faults which they had committed against the rules, and to receive a proper penance from the superior; he imagined that it would be an effectual means of preserving his fidelity to the resolutions which he had made at his first communion, if he subjected himself, like the monks, to a public accusation of his negligence and faults. With this view, he one day introduced himself into the apartment where the community were assembled for this exercise of penance, and after the others had accused themselves, he likewise threw himself at the feet of the superior, and made a public confession of his faults. This act of humility wonderfully affected all present, and some even to tears. *Sousi* continued this practice during the remainder of the vacation, as well as at all other times when on a visit at the Abbey of Joui. The Abbé de Flamanville, and the Abbot of Joui were much edified with this conduct; but his brother Maurice, whom they ironically termed *the Prior*, a young man of a gay, thoughtless disposition, was little affected by such heroic traits of piety, which he considered as singu-

larities, and sometimes made them the subject of his jokes, but always with moderation, for, notwithstanding his volatile disposition, he possessed a good heart.

Sousi heard his remarks without offence; and was as little affected by them, as he was inclined by his solicitations to do any thing contrary to duty. Steady to his principles, he rose superior to the weaknesses of human respect; and where his duty to God began, there ended his condescension to men. Although he was more sensible than the generality of mankind that piety does not consist in exterior works of piety, which are only the marks and fruits of the substance, he nevertheless, in imitation of the saints, had recourse to these helps, and endeavoured to protect his virtues by the respectable supports which religion provided.

Besides the vocal prayers which he recited, he also daily devoted half an hour at least to meditation on the law of God, and on the duties which he had to fulfil, viz: a quarter of an hour in the morning, and the same in the afternoon. Considering that his friend, the Abbé de Flamanville, resided in a seminary, and concluding that he possessed more effectual means of learning the exercise of prayer, he begged that he would give him some instructions on the method of conversing with God. "When he solicited instructions," says Flamanville, "he himself gave me such directions as covered me with confusion, when I reflected that a young man of fifteen spoke of the things of God with greater unction

and information, than I could myself who was already initiated in Holy Orders."

Sousi considered the moments which he spent at the foot of the altar as the sweetest parts of the day. He particularly delighted in frequenting the churches where the divine office was performed with the greatest piety and dignity. In a letter to a friend, he says, "I partake in the satisfaction which you feel in your present situation, and am delighted with the manner in which you say the divine office is performed; for I think that nothing is so much calculated to rouse the mind to fervour, as hearing the praises of the Divinity sung deliberately and with devotion."

During the whole time that *Sousi* resided at the abbey of Joui, whether in the vacations or at other times in the year, he attended all the church duties of the community, and his presence alone in choir became a subject of edification to all. His most frequent request to his tutor when he resided at Paris, was, *that he might be permitted to spend in the church a part of the time which was at his disposal after he had performed his school duties.* If, during his walks, he passed by a church, he immediately recollected that God was there corporally present in the blessed eucharist, and entreated as a favour that he might be permitted to enter. He paid an act of adoration to the blessed sacrament, by offering to God the affections of his soul, and in the space of a few moments he rejoined his tutor and brothers. He declared to his friends that he preferred the days of recreation merely because

on those days he could devote more time to prayer and exercises of piety.

After his course of humanity was concluded, he commenced the study of philosophy at the college of Rheims: his tutor accompanied him, not as a monitor, or guard over his conduct, but because it was customary for the children of the nobility to be attended by a tutor during the whole course of their studies. *Sousi* was incapable of taking any undue advantage, and had therefore full liberty. He however seldom left the college, and was only acquainted with those parts of the town which led to the churches and to the seminary of St. Sulpicius, where his friend *Flamanville* resided.

When he heard that a festival was to be celebrated in any neighbouring church, he attended, if his duties permitted, sometimes in the morning, in order to receive the holy communion, at other times in the evening, that he might be present at the sermon and benediction of the blessed sacrament. "As soon as he entered the church," as is related in one of the memoirs of his life, "he was penetrated with a profound respect, which was visible on his countenance and whole deportment. He knelt down at the foot of a pillar where he made his first act of adoration; from thence he removed to a retired place, where he remained immovable, adoring his Lord during the whole time that was at his disposal, which was sometimes two or three hours, especially on festivals and on days that he received the holy communion. Several of his fellow students, on whom

his example had made the deepest impression, frequently went to the church where they supposed he would be, in order to be edified by his piety, when his presence alone had generally as powerful an effect as the most pious sermon. Many could not fix their eyes on him without being moved even to tears."

Although *Sousi* had only entered upon his sixteenth year when he commenced his course of philosophy, nevertheless, as his judgment was already formed, he united intense application to a quick understanding, this study was to him little more than an amusement, and far from sufficient to occupy the whole of his time. His leisure hours he devoted to the science of salvation. From the fatiguing study of profane sciences, he turned, for amusement and relaxation, to the study of the holy scriptures. It was a subject of edification to see a young laic daily recite the divine office, and take delight in fulfilling, voluntarily, a task which, by many tepid and indolent clergymen, and even by some who are enriched with the goods of the church, is considered as an insupportable duty.

But the piety of *Sousi* was not satisfied with the mere recital of the divine office: he wished to have it in his power to entertain himself at all times and in all places with the pious sentiments which are contained in the sacred canticles, and therefore he resolved to learn them by heart; being convinced, that he could return to God, no better homage for the gift of an excellent memory which he had received, than by employing it

in collecting a store of the important maxims of religion. He could repeat most of the psalms from memory, having learnt them during the leisure hours of his vacations.

To prayer and the study of the law of God, *Sousi* united the reading of good books. He regularly applied to spiritual reading three times a day, twice in a pious book, and once in the New Testament. He testified his respect for the Holy Scriptures, by reading a chapter thereof on his knees every day; and from this method of reading it, it served as an excellent subject of meditation; he was also accustomed to commit to memory some of the verses which had affected him most. After the New Testament, the *Following of Christ* was his favourite book; it always gave him new pleasure, and was at all times his *Vademecum*.

By thus enriching his memory and heart with pious sentiments, he was so accustomed to think on God that he was never absent from his mind. Whether going to school, or taking a walk; whether in the midst of company, or in close retirement; his thoughts were always fixed on God as if he saw him, or, if I may be allowed the expression, familiarly communed with him. "I remember," says the *Abbé Flamanville*, "on one occasion when we were reading together a chapter on the presence of God, he related to me the example of two friends, who, in order to keep themselves always in the presence of God, put this question to each other when they met, *are you thinking of him?* This practice he immedi-

ately proposed, and engaged me to adopt. He even improved upon it, by proposing a sign when our situation would not permit us to make use of words. So that in company, and even at table, we put the question to each other, *are you thinking on God?* and I can say with truth, that I never once found his thoughts otherwise engaged."

This continual attention of *Sousi* to the presence of God preserved him in a state of recollection even amidst riot and dissipation. The most frivolous conversation of the people of the world, became the subjects of salutary reflections. Thus, when he heard them speak of their amusements and pleasures, or express their desires of riches and honours, he immediately called to mind the maxims of the gospel which condemn those sentiments, and without presuming to censure openly men so much his superior in years, he at last made a resolution never to think or speak, as they did in his presence. If at any time they asked his opinion on a point which did not appear conformable to the law of God, he gave it with becoming modesty, but at the same time with all the frankness which became the cause of virtue.

The sight of creatures was to him a delightful source of meditation;—some reminded him of the goodness of God—others of his power; all were the subjects of pious reflections, which he liberally indulged, and from time to time suggested to his friends. The following is an extract of a letter which he wrote to a friend who resided near the sea coast—

“The advantage of living in the country is truly great, because every production of nature which we behold is calculated to elevate our thoughts to God and the Creator. The most proper sentiments to be entertained on those occasions are, I think, *acts of faith*, by declaring to God that what we see can be the work of his hands alone ; and *acts of humility*, by acknowledging our littleness and insignificance when compared with the power which created these wonders, and continues to preserve them.

“Remember me before God, I entreat you, when you frequent the retired grottoes which you described in your last letter, or when you walk on the sea shore. From your description, I conceive that the view of the ocean must be a constant source of pleasure and utility. The mind must be incessantly excited to *adore* the majesty of HIM who created that element, and who continues to preside over it. I hope that in some of your letters, you will impart to me the pious sentiments which God instils into your mind in your solitude. A thought lately struck me, that eternity is, with regard to life, what the port is to the sea: for as the port is the place where sailors repose after a long voyage, during which they were exposed to numberless storms and tempests, so eternity is the harbour where Christians are to repose after the tempestuous labours of a troubled life; where so many vicissitudes, so many miseries and temptations must be endured: and again, as the sailor in a violent tempest, frequently sighs for the port, so the

Christian in the midst of the afflictions by which he is surrounded, ought incessantly to sigh after eternity, as the place where, re-united to God, he will rest secure from all dangers."

The piety of *Sousi* likewise found a plentiful source of instruction in the various events of life; as well in the afflictions which happened to individuals, as in the public calamities which laid waste whole provinces. When he heard of a fire, of a sudden death, a destructive storm of hail, or a mortality, he usually said, "let us give thanks to God who spares us in his mercy." He generally, on those occasions, cited the following verse from the psalms, *Misericordia Domini quia non sumus consumpti*: we are indebted to the mercies of the Lord that we are not consumed. He was displeased whenever he heard his school-fellows and friends complain of the weather, and told them that God was the regulator of all things;—that the inclemencies of the seasons entered into the designs of his Providence; and that inciting his children by temporal punishment to avoid eternal, was the pure effect of his mercy. Once hearing an intimate friend complain of the cold, which he seemed to endure with impatience, "My dear friend," said he, "how can you, with those sentiments, recite this verse of the *Benedicite*: Ye frost and cold bless the Lord, ye ice and snow bless the Lord." For his part, the most tempestuous weather, even although it defeated some favourite project, could never, even for a moment, affect the serenity of his countenance. One recreation day, when they

were on the point of walking out on a party of pleasure, it happened that a violent storm prevented them. It may be easily conceived what a disappointment it was to all, and that many complaints were uttered on the occasion; *Sousi*, however, convinced that it happened by the will of God, was perfectly content; blessed his Divine Providence, and preserved his soul in peace. This was his conduct on all occasions. Whether he was exposed to contradictions and difficulties, or attacked by indisposition and illness, the *will of God* was his *only rule*, and he bowed to it with *submission*.

Moral evil appeared to be the only thing that gave him sorrow. At all times, when he witnessed an offence against God, he was sensibly afflicted and as there is nothing in the world so frequently to be witnessed as sin, he on that account seldom manifested that cheerfulness and gaiety which is so natural to youth. However, he freely indulged innocent mirth when he was in company with those who entertained the same sentiments of piety as himself, and with whom he could freely speak the language of religion. A young clergyman, one of this number, once remonstrated with him, and said, that he ought to endeavour to make virtue appear amiable, and for that reason to be more cheerful in company; for that purpose citing the example of his two elder brothers, who were pious, and very agreeable in society. "I don't know," replied *Sousi*, "how they do; as for my part, I cannot be cheerful, nor pretend to be cheerful, when I hear language so

totally opposite to the maxims of our Divine Master; and I find, that when I do engage for a few minutes in the idle and useless conversation of people of the world, I cannot find myself in that state of tranquillity in the evening in which I had endeavored to put myself in the morning." On another occasion he was asked, why he was always so serious? He replied, "because, Sir, I have a great undertaking on my hands." As he said no more, they were at a loss to discover what this great undertaking could be, but in vain; for people of the world have no suspicion that the son of a minister of state, in the flower of youth, and in the midst of affluence, could consider *salvation* as an affair of such *great importance*.

The virtuous *Sousi*, not content with dedicating the whole day to sweet communication with God, devoted a part of the night likewise to the same enjoyment. No time appeared to him so proper for prayer and meditation as the silent moments of the night, when he awoke from sleep. His friends who were edified by his fervour, aware that many acts of piety escaped their observation, had the curiosity, more than once, to listen at his door at midnight; and, at a time when he supposed that Heaven alone was witness to his amorous sighs, they overheard him pouring forth his soul to God in such sentiments of love and joy, as excited their astonishment.

As it is natural to speak of the object which we particularly love, so the pious *Sousi* spoke frequently of God, and always with the sweetest unction. "I confess," says the Abbé

Flamantville in his memoirs, "that the little good that I have done ever since I had the happiness of his acquaintance, is entirely owing to his pious conversation. When we were at liberty he spoke the sentiments of his soul without restraint, and he far surpassed any thing that could have been expected from a person of his age. I was frequently astonished to such a degree as to be perceived by him. Then, as if he dreaded a thought of vain-glory, he remained silent as if he had forgot what he was about to say, and begged of me to deliver my sentiments on the same subject. I did so to the best of my power, but at the same time I blushed to see with what attention he listened, when I only confused the subject, in which he spoke with the most feelingunction and clearness."

The letters which *Sousi* wrote to his friends expressed the same sentiments of piety as his conversation; and there is not one in my whole collection, (which is numerous) that does not offer some instructive lesson, that does not express some virtuous sentiment, or that does not display a mind enlightened by the spirit of God, penetrated with his love, and walking constantly in the divine presence. This will be sufficiently proved by the fragments which I shall cite in this place, and in other parts of this work.

"This day," says he, writing to the Abbé Flamantville, "I read an admirable chapter on the presence of God. What I remarked as particularly adapted for practice, was frequently to say to ourselves, *O my God! why do I not always*

turn my eyes towards thee, Thou who art always beholding me? why do I not always think of thee, Thou who art always thinking of me? My soul, thy true place is in the presence of thy God, but is it there thou generally residest?

“As the birds have their nests wherein to repose, and the stags their covert, where they retire for shade in the heat of the day, so, in the same manner, my dear friend, ought our heart to chuse a place of rest, sometimes on Mount Calvary—sometimes in the wounds of our Saviour, and sometimes in other places, according as its piety shall suggest, where we may obtain that repose which our exterior occupations render necessary, and where we may find a place of security, and, as it were, a fortress inaccessible to temptations.

“How happy is that soul, my dear friend, who, like David in the midst of his various important duties, can say with truth to God, *Thou art, O God, my refuge, in thee I find a wall which protects me from my enemies—a covering which preserves me from the tempest—a shade which refreshes me in the heat.*—Lord, says the same holy king in his psalms, *Lord I am always before thee.*—Yes, my God, thou shalt be always present to my mind.—*I have turned my eyes towards thee, my God, towards thee who dwellest in the heavens.*—*My eyes are always fixed on the Lord.* I have many other pious exercises on the same subject to impart to you, which in my opinion are very good; but I have no leisure at present; we shall return next Saturday.”

In another letter to the same friend, he says,

"I doubt not but you have it in your power, in your delightful retreat, frequently to say with David: *I have watched, I have imitated the pelican in my solitude; I have sought to become like the night raven among ruins; I have been alone, like the sparrow on the house top.**

"I have lately read, my dear friend, that besides the literal meaning of these sentences of David, which give us to understand that this holy king daily allotted some hours to retirement, and to the contemplation of heavenly things, there is also a figurative sense, which denotes three retreats of our Saviour, wherein we ourselves ought to seek him. At his *birth* he appeared in an abandoned stable, like the bird of night, among ruins, *bewailing* our miseries; and washing away our sins with his *tears*;—on *Mount Calvary* he was like the *solitary pelican*, which restores life to its young by the *effusion* of its own blood;—and in his *ascension* he was like the *sparrow* on the house top, when he ascended on the *wings* of his power to heaven, which is, as it were, the house top of this world.

"Yes, it is there, my dear friend, that we may easily make our retreat, without being obliged to desist from our ordinary occupations. It is related that the Pious Count of Arian, in Provence,† in a letter to his wife, who desired to hear from him, wrote these words: *If you wish to see me during my absence, go into the heart of Jesus, for it is there that I reside.* Is there, in fact,

* Ps. ci.

† See his life in Butler's SS. LL. Sep. 27.

any thing so delightful or so advantageous as those moments of retirement, those elevations of the heart, those good thoughts, which we may indulge at all times and in all places. This is the habit which I must endeavour to contract; for then I shall be able to reap advantage from every occurrence; the most trivial things will then elevate my mind to God. By this means our conversations will be in heaven, and our thoughts resemble those of the blessed above. I assure you that you will find no exercise so consoling, or profitable as this. No;—when a person has once tasted these delights, his heart immediately excludes all the false enjoyments of the world; he renounces them, he despises them as dung. Farewell my dear friend.”

Describing, in a letter to a fellow-student, an intimate friend, what had given him the greatest edification since they were last in company together, he writes as follows :

“I believe that brother James, (a novice in the abbey of Joui) made his profession last Sunday. I assisted on the same day at the profession of one of my aunts, who has taken the habit among the nuns of St. Mary in St. Anthony’s Street. Oh! this was a heavenly day for me; for on one side, I united myself in spirit with the sacrifice of our good brother, and on the other, I assisted in person. I should indeed have spent the day more agreeably could I have been present at both: for I would not have been less edified at the profession of brother James, than I was at my aunt’s. She is a woman of extraordinary

piety, and appears to possess all the qualities requisite for a good religious woman. It is delightful to hear her. When we are conversing together, she is like an angel. She possesses such a pure love of God, and speaks so feelingly on death, on eternity, and other subjects, which we ought to have either on our lips or in our thoughts, that when I afterwards hear the people of the world speaking of pleasures and vanities, I am astonished that there should be such an opposition of sentiments in people who are on earth, one as well as the other, for no other purpose but to think of heaven, and labour for salvation."

Sousi never permitted himself to insert in his letters either trifles or indifferent things: in the whole collection before me, there is only one letter in which any political news is mentioned, and this, as the context plainly declares, he mentioned because the good of religion was concerned. "Vienna," says he, "was on the point of being taken by the Turks, but they have been attacked by the Poles, put to flight, and are now pursued. This intelligence should be a subject of joy to us all, and we ought to return thanks to God for thus coming to the assistance of his people, and manifesting his power against the infidels."

Sousi felt an extreme interest in every thing which tended to the good of the Church. The conquests of faith over infidelity were so many causes of triumph to him, and he was sensibly afflicted at the outrages it received from Heretics and bad Catholics. One of his favourite exercises of devotion was to pray for the necessities

of the Church; and at the times* when ordinations were given, he invited his friends to unite with him in his supplication to God, that he would give pastors to his Church according to his own heart.

Being particularly charmed with the zeal of those apostolical men, who renounced all, and themselves likewise, in order to go and announce the gospel at the hazard of their lives to infidel nations, he frequently envied their happiness, but saw nothing in the generosity of their sacrifice, which ought to excite surprise in the mind of a Christian, much less of a minister of religion. His friend Flamanville having imparted to him his resolution of consecrating himself to the foreign missions,† he, without expressing any surprise, congratulated him on his vocation, “which,” he said, “would lay him under a kind of necessity of labouring for God alone, and of relying solely on him.” For his part, he thought that the absence of his dearest friend would be to him

* The time for ordinations are the four Ember Saturdays, and the Saturdays preceding Passion and Easter Sunday.—Trans.

† The foreign missions were supplied by religious men of several orders, who had houses for that purpose. Besides these, an establishment was formed in Paris, under the protection of the king, for such of the secular clergy whose zeal incited them to devote their lives to the conversion of infidels: this was the SEMINARY OF FOREIGN MISSIONS. In this house, the vocation of the young ecclesiastics, who presented themselves, was tried during a short time; and when they were judged fit for the great work, they were conveyed over to the idolatrous nations, and received regular supplies for their subsistence. The accounts which these missionaries continue to transmit to Europe are of the most consoling nature; they assure us, that the zeal and sanctity of their numerous converts, rival the primitive times of the Church. However, to the inexpressible loss of these infant churches, all these establishments in France are now abolished.—Author.

a subject of greater gain than loss, because his loss would be only a privation of his company, but his gain would be an increase of the glory and kingdom of God, which was far more dear to him. The Abbé de Flamanville, on the eve of his departure, paid a visit to his friend, in order to take his last farewell in this world. *Sousi* embraced him with sentiments of the greatest joy, and said, "Farewell then, my dear friend, I request a brother's share in all your labours: we shall be separated in body, but in spirit we may every day, be united in the sacred heart of Jesus. I entreat you, do not neglect to meet me there; I will not fail on my part." Flamanville could not refrain from telling him, that his society was the only thing in France that he left with regret. "Why this regret?" replied *Sousi*, "life is so short that a separation like this, is not losing each other, but only a removal to a short distance, that we may meet hereafter with greater pleasure." "When I was leaving him, continues Flamanville, he addressed me in a manner which bespoke the tender feelings of friendship, notwithstanding his apparent resignation and tranquility: "Beg of God, my dear friend, that he would take off my affections from creatures, that I may not be grieved when it shall please his Divine Majesty to take them from me. Your absence will deprive me of the greatest source of consolation, but it will, at the same time, oblige me more perfectly to put my confidence in God. May our Lord fill you with holy zeal, and arm your soul with patience: O my friend, *they who trust in him shall never be*

confounded." These were his last words to me. They pierced my very heart, and it is with difficulty that my feelings permit me to relate them to you. My grief this moment is renewed; the sighs which heave in my breast, and the tears which again water my cheeks, are vouchers for the truth of what I have written."

This pious youth prepared himself by repeated trivial sacrifices during the day, for those greater and more painful sacrifices to nature, which Providence might hereafter require at his hands. As soon as he perceived he desired any thing with too great earnestness, or that he had too great attachment to any thing that he possessed, he immediately renounced and dispossessed himself of it, when he had it in his power. With this spirit he made the following sacrifice: having very fine hair, which his friends represented to him as a valuable ornament, he, with the leave of his parents, had two thirds of it cut off, that it might not be a subject of vain-glory: and when his friends expressed a pity that so fine a head of hair should be spoiled, he replied, "long nails and long hair, appear to me equally superfluous; and I think that a person ought not to be more attached to one than to the other."

If he felt a repugnance to any branch of study, that alone was a sufficient reason to induce him to apply to it with greater earnestness. For this reason, the school duties which pleased him the least, were those which he performed the best: this was his mode of conduct on every other occasion; being ever delighted when he could offer

up to God the sacrifice of his will. His brother Maurice gave him frequent opportunities, which he always embraced. This young man seemed to be an instrument in the hands of God for exercising the patience of *Sousi*, by contradicting his inclinations and opposing his pursuits. Being ever inclined to laugh, play and talk, he frequently broke in upon him in the midst of his devotions—interrupted him whilst in conversation with his friends, and if he saw that he had any thing that pleased him, insisted on having it. *Sousi*, though only a year younger than his brother, bore his importunities and petulance with a patience which was frequently admired: he submitted with good nature to every thing that could give him pleasure, and gave him every thing that he asked for. On one occasion only, he hesitated for a short time before he consented to grant his request. *Sousi*, who loved order and regularity in all his affairs, had completely fitted up the little study which he occupied. Nothing was splendid, but all simple and neat. He had collected several little decorations which bespoke his piety. What he esteemed most was a selection of sentences from the holy Scriptures, which he caused to be neatly framed. In a word, the arrangement of his little solitude, besides the expense, cost him many hours of his recreation-time. The whole being at length completed, his brother Maurice came to see it, and finding it quite agreeable to his taste, concluded by asking him for it, saying, that he would give him the one which he occupied in return. *Sousi* at first beg-

ged to be excused, and, with his usual mildness, represented to his brother, that it would be easy, if he chose to take a little pains, to make his study as agreeable as the one which he admired. This happened on a Sunday after dinner. The time of vespers being come, they went together to the church of St. Anthony. After vespers, *Sousi* said to his brother : " As you find my room so agreeable, I give it you, you may take possession of it to-day." And in order to punish himself for hesitating to make this sacrifice at first, he gave him several other little ornaments which he had not asked for, but which he readily accepted. " He declared to me," says the Abbé Flamanville, who relates this trait, " that if his brother had not accepted of them, he would have burnt them, rather than have possessed any thing with attachment. He copied all the sentences which adorned his study on a piece of paper, and pinned it to the tapestry, where it remained after his death ; and assured me, that this simplicity affected him more sensibly than he had ever been before, and that he thought this act of self-denial had procured him many special blessings from heaven. Alas ! said he, on this occasion, a person thinks he has done a great deal, when he despises the world in great things, and behold little things divide his heart ; this my good friend, is an error very dangerous for a Christian."

With this disposition, *Sousi* neglected nothing which could contribute to wean his affections entirely from the earth, and increase his piety. However trivial the exercise of devotion, if it

were recommended by the suffrage of pious men, it immediately became estimable in his eyes. He even adopted it when it was in his power, for it gave him the greatest satisfaction to attach himself to God and his duties by some new tie. Actuated by this principle, he contracted with his devout friends reciprocal engagements of piety. "He advised us," says one of them named *Xili*, "never to pass by a church without going in to adore the blessed Sacrament, if it were only for an instant: and when we were in our room, to turn ourselves towards the church of the college, and sometimes prostrate ourselves to adore our Lord, before whom, by the light of the faith, we should be as intimately present, as if we were at the foot of the altar."

It was the custom of *Sousi* to imagine that his angel-guardian was always by his side, and to address him as if he actually saw him present. He often represented to his friends the benefit they would reap from devotion to their angel—to their patrons—to St. Joseph—and above all to the Blessed Virgin. He himself recited the rosary in her honour every day, and always solemnized her festivals by receiving the holy communion. In one of his letters to Flamanville, which he wrote when he entered upon his course of philosophy, I find that at that time he selected one of the festivals of the Blessed Virgin on which he intended to devote himself to her, by a particular act of consecration. "I have this long time desired," says he, "to put myself more immediately under the protection of the Blessed Virgin,

whose assistance is so necessary for procuring those graces from God, of which we stand in so much need. I should be glad, my dear friend, if you would send me, the *Think well on it*,* that I might look over it this evening, and see what are the exercises which it prescribes in honour of our good Mother; for I intend, with the blessing of God, to inscribe my name to-morrow on the list of her humble servants."

Of all the means, however, which *Sousi* employed in order to *strengthen himself* in the service of God, he considered none so efficacious as the *holy Communion*. We accordingly find, in the memoirs of his life, that he frequently presented himself at the sacred table, and seldom failed to accompany his friends when any of them went to communicate. It was in the holy Sacrament that he sought counsel in his doubts—support under temptations—and strength against all the enemies of his salvation. It was by virtue thereof, that he triumphed over the world and its pernicious examples—the devil and his snares—and his own passions, which to a young man are more dangerous enemies than either the world or the devil. Moreover, as he had acquired, even in that tender age, a super-eminent knowledge of the ways of salvation, he was not ignorant that they who communicate seldom, are not the people who communicate with the greatest fervour; and, on the contrary, he was sensible that if it

*Not the *Think well on it* of Bishop Challoner, but a French prayer book of the same title.—Trans.

were requisite that a young man should live innocent, in order to be worthy to communicate often, so it was necessary that he should communicate frequently, in order to obtain the grace to live innocent.

This doctrine, which has been always regarded by the Church as the doctrine of Christ himself, inspired the holy youth with the sweetest sentiments of gratitude and joy. "I have found in the *New Testament*," says he, in a letter to the Abbé Flamanville, "a beautiful subject for meditation before communion in the sixth chapter of St. John. Our Blessed Saviour frequently repeats in that chapter, that *he is the bread of life*;—that *he who eats of this bread shall never die*, and that *he who does not eat him shall not have life in him*; this he says in order to manifest to us his extreme desire that we should frequently nourish our souls with divine food."

Although it may be said that the whole life of *Sousi* was an habitual preparation for communion, he nevertheless prepared himself each time, with as much zeal and care as he did at the first; this divine manna never lost its savour, but continued to fill his soul with that exquisite delight which it had always done. It appears, that besides his regular communions on Sundays and festivals, his director also permitted him to receive on other particular occasions; for example, he was seen to communicate at the great seminary of St. Sulpicius on certain festivals of devotion peculiar to that house. On one occasion, not being able to procure leave, he wrote as follows to the Abbé

Flamanville: "To-morrow you celebrate at the seminary the festival of the *interior of the Blessed Virgin*.* I doubt whether my letter will arrive in time to beg a participation in the holy communion which you will not fail to receive: but I trust whether it does or does not, you will not forget me."

By thus labouring to sanctify the years of his youth, *Sousi* did not neglect to provide proper means to secure his virtue during the other stages of life; since, on this account, during his course of philosophy, he applied himself in a particular manner to the study of his vocation. All his communions, and every good action which he performed during that time, were offered up to God for the purpose of the manifestation of his will concerning the state of life which his providence had marked out for him. But in order to become worthy to hear the voice of heaven on a subject of such importance, he considered himself bound to consult God in silence and retirement. In a letter to a fellow-student, he advised his friend to make a retreat for ten days in the house† of St. Lazarus, and there to reflect maturely on the choice of a state of life. He himself, likewise

* A festival instituted for the purpose of returning thanks to God for the super-eminent graces and virtues with which the soul of the B. V. was enriched; and intended for an incitement to Christians to apply to God for a share of the same blessings. This festival is not observed by the whole Church.—Trans.

† The chief house of the congregation of the Fathers of the Mission instituted by St. Vincent of Paul. It was a regulation in that society to admit young clergymen, and others, to make retreats of eight or ten days in their houses, and to prescribe to them suitable exercises.—Trans.

by means of a retreat, proposed to decide on his own vocation, and fixed upon the Easter holidays as the most convenient time for it, as the public schools were then closed for eight days: at that time he was studying natural philosophy. "I perceive," says he, writing to a friend, "that I stand in need of a retreat to prepare myself for the choice of a state of life. My studies engage my thoughts so much, that I cannot apply with sufficient attention to the great truths which ought to occupy my mind when I make a decisive choice: It was my wish to make my retreat at the seminary of St. Nicholas, thinking that it would suit me better than any other place because I should there enjoy the benefit of my director; but my father, to whom I mentioned the subject, was of a contrary opinion, and preferred some other place. Having consulted Mr. Polot, my director, in what manner I ought to employ myself during that time; he said he was afraid that a retreat would increase the complaint in my breast;—that he thought it more adviseable for me not to make a retreat at present, and that he would consult Mr. Leger. Nothing is as yet decided. I sincerely wish that they may give their consent, although perhaps it would be more to my purpose to place implicit confidence in my director, and forego the pleasures of a retreat, if he should think proper." In fact, such was the decision of his director; and in a short time after he was seized with the illness of which he died.

Although *Sousi* had studied his vacation for eighteen months, with a full determination of em-

bracing it, whatever it might be, yet God, who is frequently pleased to exercise the patience of his elect, in order to increase their reward, permitted him to remain in profound ignorance of that which he sought to learn with such a pure and christian zeal. "How happy are you," he would frequently say to those of his friends who had decided on their choice of a state of life, "how happy are you : you see before you the path which is to lead you to heaven ; you have only to walk in it with ardour, and without looking back. For my part, I am continually soliciting God to show me the way in which he would have me walk, but he returns me no answer." The Abbé de Flamanville, a little before he took leave of him, in order to proceed on his journey to the foreign missions, to which, as we before noticed, he had devoted himself, entreated him to say to what state of life he thought himself called. "I am so unfortunate, my dear friend," replied he, "that I know not whether God will vouchsafe to call me to any state : but I can assure you of this, that if I knew at this moment that he called me to the bottom of the sea, I would not hesitate to throw myself in head foremost."

A letter which *Sousi* wrote to one of his most intimate friends, informs us that he entertained a great esteem for the religious state. "Mr. Bourdoloue," says he, "lately paid us a visit at Haute-Briere,* and gave us an excellent sermon on the advantages of a religious state for the attainment

*A country seat of his father.

of salvation, and on the obstacles which are experienced in the world. That sermon alone would have convinced me of this truth, if God had not long before by his grace made me sensible of it. I assure you, that when I reflect on the time which I have already spent unprofitable in the world, I regret it much." Thus did this humble young man make no account of his application to the performance of his duties, and the solicitude with which he prepared himself, by the practice of virtue in his youth, for the graces of God during the other stages of life.

However, his doubts on the state of life which he ought to embrace still subsisting, with little chance of their ever being removed; as they relate to a time of life which he was never to reach, God, although he seemed to turn a deaf ear to his earnest and repeated solicitations, had nevertheless designs of mercy on him: it was his will that he should offer in his person a model of perfection to youth, and to no other state: this was the term of the vocation of *Sousi*: and, if I may be allowed the expression, of his mission likewise. His own salvation, and the salvation of many others who were to be affected by his holy example, was to depend on his fidelity in fulfilling the duties of youth, and on his endeavours to sanctify that state alone.

PART SECOND.

THE virtuous man is not virtuous for his own benefit only, since his example serves as a continual exhortation to all who enjoy the happiness of his acquaintance; and altho' he seems to labour only for the glory of God and the sanctification of his own soul, he nevertheless contributes to the sanctification of others. Young men, in general, have fulfilled the precept of fraternal charity, when they have given good example; and it would be a dangerous illusion on their part, to arrogate to themselves the office of teacher at the time when they themselves stand in need of the counsels of others.

Sousi was a remarkable exception to this general rule: he was at the same time both the apostle and the model of piety: such was his character in the bosom of his own family, in the society of his friends and companions, at the seminary of St. Sulpicius, which he was in the habit of frequenting; and in the midst even of the world, when he was necessitated to associate with it. Wherever he appeared, his virtues were always a subject of edification: and they who were united to him by the closest links of friendship and familiarity, declare that, from the time of his first communion to his death, they never witnessed an action which was not praise-worthy, nor heard him speak a single word in conversation which

was not intended as an invitation to virtue to those who heard him.

Sousi testified his affection for his parents, not like many children, by empty adulation and fond caresses alone, but by a prudent and regular behaviour on all occasions: and every exterior mark of respect and love which he gave them, took its rise in the virtuous sentiments of his heart. From the most tender age, he never would consent to commit the slightest act of disobedience towards them, although he might have had every reason to expect to escape unpunished. The tenderness which they always expressed for him, and their readiness to excuse and pardon every fault, were, to such a well-disposed mind, only more pressing motives to induce him to avoid with care every thing that could give them the least offence. He loved them with a disinterested love, and more for their sakes than his own. For which reason he prayed for their salvation with more earnestness and perseverance, than for any other blessing. When his father was called to the ministry, he recited every day a prayer, which he composed himself, the purport of which was, to beg of God that he would strengthen the new minister with his grace, and enable him to resist the temptations arising from the splendour of dignity and pomp. On this occasion he wrote the following letter to a friend: "You have heard that M. Colbert is dead: my father succeeds him. This last event is to me as much a subject of grief as of surprise: for although I hope that God will enable my father to

fulfil his duties like a good Christian, nevertheless honours and dignities are dangerous, because they too often cause their possessors to forget the greatest of all concerns—eternity. I hope, my dear friend, you will not fail to pray that God would give my dear father grace to fulfil the duties of his office to his greater glory, and his own salvation.”

Although the parents of *Sousi*, who were both prudent and religious, would on no account impose on him any command which they thought prejudicial to piety, yet there was one injunction which he complied with reluctantly, and this was the command to wear rich clothes, and to dress himself in other respects in the manner which they thought suitable to his age and rank. Obedience then was a painful sacrifice; he nevertheless obeyed cheerfully, and never mentioned his repugnance but to his most intimate friends. Once when his father had given him a richer dress than he had been accustomed to wear, and had presented him likewise with a beautiful sword, (being then in the school of philosophy) he said to the Abbé de Flamanville; “Do you see, my dear friend, to what the dignities of this world obliges us to submit: if I had been the son of a man in low life, no one would ever have thought of making me a fine gentleman. I assure you I sometimes envy the condition of little Jack, who runs on errands at our hotel: I would more willingly wear his clothes than all these vain trappings which are supposed to be indispensable in a minister’s son, although they so little become

a Christian. But God commands me to obey my parents; and this is what removes my fears and gives me consolation." On another occasion, continues Flamanville, he went with his friends to Villeneuve, but forgot his fine sword; I suspected that he had left it behind on purpose; but he assured me to the contrary, and said, "You must be sensible that the satisfaction I feel in not wearing my sword, is not sufficiently great to induce me to purchase it by an act of disobedience."

The superiors of *Sousi* were not less edified by his behaviour towards them than his parents. Their will was, on all occasions, the rule of his own; and he followed it the more willingly, because, as he said, obeying them was at the same time obeying both God and his parents. Obedience, thus supported by religion and reason, did not appear to him as a restraint, or if it did, he endured it with pleasure. Even in his most tender age he had acquired the confidence and the friendship of his masters, who found him to be, not a child who stood in need of a watchful eye, but a young friend, the child of reason and religion, who only required to be informed of his duties, in order to be induced to fulfil them with cheerfulness and exactitude. When he commenced his course of philosophy, he was allowed full liberty, but the consequence was, that he imposed on himself that strict duty of obedience from which they had exempted him. When he requested permission of his master for the least indulgence, he asked it with the simplicity of a

child, and followed their advice with the same strictness as their commands. His friends were so well acquainted with this his disposition, that, when on one occasion he said, *Mr. Leger wishes it should be done*, they made no farther attempts to induce him to change his mind.

In school, *Sousi* gave to his fellow-students an edifying example of strict compliance with the established rules, and of uninterrupted attention to the lectures of the professor. We have already remarked in the rule of life which he had composed, that he would not permit himself to speak a word to his next neighbour, without necessity. But at the time that he imposed on himself a law of silence when it was proper to be observed, he imposed on himself another likewise, which was, to be always ready to speak when any questions were put to him on the subject of the lesson of the day: this law he was never known to transgress. It was remarked, that during his whole course of philosophy, he never once quitted the place which was assigned to him at the commencement of the year of logic: although the arrangements then made was soon broken by his fellow students. The tacit approbation of his master authorized the students to converse together in a low voice, whilst they were putting their papers in order, after the dictating* was

* In the colleges abroad; the students both in philosophy and divinity, transcribed the treatises which they were to study. The reason of which was, that the diversity of opinions on speculative points, and the new discoveries continually made, at least in philosophy, would not allow the expense of printing the voluminous and multiplied systems of the respective masters.—Trans.

concluded, and before the explanation of the lesson took place; *Sousi*, however, mindful of the law which he had imposed on himself, would not avail himself of the custom, and remained silent. During that short interval he read.

But of all the superiors which Providence had placed over him, there was no one for whom *Sousi* entertained greater respect, or in whom he placed more confidence, than his spiritual director. He looked up to him, as to an angel of God, and received his counsels and advice as so many commands from heaven: he scrupulously fulfilled them even in things which had no immediate relation to his confessions; on those occasions, I mean, when he consulted him, not in quality of his confessor, but as a man of abilities and prudence. In M. Polot, *Sousi* was fortunate to find a man whose talents were equal to his zeal, and under whose direction a well-disposed young man might advance rapidly in the paths of christian perfection. The following trait affords a sufficient idea of the deference which *Sousi* always paid to this enlightened superior of the seminary of St. Nicolas. Finding in himself a secret desire to embrace a religious state, in order to secure his salvation, he imparted the secret to M. Polot, and asked his advice on the subject. M. Polot replied, that as yet he was young; that although the desire was laudable in itself, it nevertheless might not be the state to which God called him; and concluded by advising him to think no more of it during his two years of philosophy, nor to mention the subject

to any one during that time, but merely to beg of God that he would enlighten him: after which term he said he would give his opinion on the state to which he thought he was called. A strict compliance with this advice was not an easy task. His dearest friends, Flamanville and Xili, frequently asked, and even importuned him, to mention the state of life to which he felt himself most inclined, but he returned them no answer. Not a word escaped him which could give them the most distant idea of what M. Polot had advised him to keep secret: and it was not till after his decease that they made the edifying discovery, that he who on other occasions had concealed nothing from them, could keep that secret inviolable which was recommended to him by his confessor.

The behaviour of *Sousi* towards his equals and inferiors was not less edifying or prudent than his conduct towards his parents and superiors. His polite and engaging manners, his unalterable serenity, and in particular, his charity, which no limits could circumscribe, made him beloved by all with whom he was in the least connected. His bosom friends were few in number, but these he had selected with such judgment, that he never had reason to repent of the confidence which he placed in them: it would however perhaps be more consonant with truth to say, that they acquired the greatest share of their piety from his conversation, and that he himself, by his example and instructions, made them companions worthy of his confidence. This

is ingenuously confessed by those who were the most intimately connected with him. Flamanville and Xili, in the memoirs which they drew up relating to their dear friend, declare that, after God, they were indebted to him for the knowledge which they had acquired, both of virtue itself, and of the necessity of practising it from their youth.

It was, as I before remarked, at the abbey of Joni that *Sousi* first became acquainted with the Abbé de Flamanville; and, as is usually the case with men of piety, their first meeting was the commencement of an union which continued indissoluble through life. The exemplary piety of *Sousi* on one side, and the happy disposition of Flamanville on the other, were the foundation of that close intimacy which always subsisted between them; an union strictly conformable with the principles of christianity, and worthy to be proposed for the imitation of all young people who are solicitous to contract none but useful friendships. "After I had once obtained the happiness of his acquaintance," says the Abbé de Flamanville, "he was not long before he proposed to perform with me several small exercises of piety, and to regulate our time in such a manner, as to be able to allot a considerable share to study. Although it was the time of vacation, I formed the resolution, from his example, to rise in the morning at half after four. We immediately retired into the wood adjoining the abbey, to make our morning prayer. As I was then in holy orders and a member of the seminary, he expected

to find in me a man habituated in the practice of the virtues which are inculcated in those houses of piety; he imparted to me his desire of serving God solely and perfectly; he described to me his sentiments on prayer, retirement and mortification, in terms which put me to the blush when I reflected on my own tepidity. He was not satisfied with merely conversing on the things of God : no, his delight was to put them in practice. Sometimes he proposed to me exercises which I should not have had the resolution of mind seriously to think of ; nevertheless I performed them ; but my motives were not so pure as his ; for I was induced by his example, and by the shame which I should have felt in acknowledging to a layman much younger than myself, that I had not sufficient courage to perform what he had the courage to propose."

Next to the Abbé de Flamanville, one of the dearest friends of *Sousi* was Xili, the young Irishman whom I mentioned above. Their connection was intimate, and cultivated in a particular manner on both sides. They were fellow students, and it appears that their acquaintance commenced during their course of rhetoric. They afterwards studied philosophy under the same master. Xili, like Flamanville, was blessed with an excellent disposition, and a happy temper : his natural inclination to piety stood in need of the exhortations and guidance of a zealous and enlightened friend like *Sousi*. The cheerfulness of Xili bordered on levity, and kept him in a constant state of dissipation. Although he did not

entirely neglect his duties, he performed them nevertheless in a very superficial manner. He was always inclined to joke and trifle: and although he felt both affection and esteem for *Sousi*, he acknowledges that, when he first had the happiness of his acquaintance, his piety appeared to him rather too austere, and he hoped he should in time be able to correct it; but, on the contrary, instead of reforming his friend, he himself was reformed by the example of *Sousi*. The character of the two friends may be drawn from the following conversation taken from the memoirs of Xili.

"I sometimes felt an inclination to joke with him, says Xili: I related to him the most laughable stories, and said every thing that came into my mind. He rebuked me, and expressed the pain which he felt, but with the greatest mildness. My friend, he would say to me, let us talk of some things more to the purpose, and not lose our time in such useless conversation.—What, replied I, *must* we never indulge in innocent relaxation, but be always serious and collected?—No, I don't say so; but let us at least avoid all that idle, that useless discourse for which we shall have to answer before God.—*Well then*, continued I, *what is the news at court to-day? how goes on the war in Hungary?*—You know very well that I never trouble myself about politics.—*But how can you, the son of a minister, be ignorant of those things?*—Because the government of the state, and the command of armies are not my concerns.—*They are not more my concerns than yours, but a person wishes to know a little of what passes in the*

world.—For my part, my dear friend, I declare that the study of my logic, and the working out my salvation are more than sufficient to engross my whole attention.—*What a fine head of hair you have, I cannot help admiring it. It is a pity it is not better dressed, particularly as you have a valet at your command.*—No pity whatever, my good friend, a Christian ought rather to be solicitous about the interior decoration of the head, and leave the exterior to women and weak minds.—*You ought at least, to powder your hair as I do, who am not a person of such consequence as you.*—Yes, to be sure, in order to make myself agreeable in the eyes of Xili I ought to powder like Xili ; I ought to decorate my person, and appear the fashionable young nobleman ; this becomes me perfectly.—*But what do you think of the fair of St. Germain? it is very near, and I hope you will take a walk to see it.*—My friend, what shall we do there?—*There will be a great many things worth seeing, I dare say.*—Yes : we shall see indecent mimics, men fighting, we shall hear people swearing, and on every side behold Christians offending the Almighty.—*But, my good friend, you are not obliged to pay attention to these matters ; with the money you have, you may go to the stands, and indulge your taste in the purchase of such articles as you would not find elsewhere.*—Ah ! my friend, when we have money at our disposal, it is more adviseable to procure food for the distressed poor, than to indulge ourselves in such useless, such superfluous trifles.’

Xili, who here in his own words describes his

levity at the time when he first formed an intimacy with *Sousi*, by degrees found himself at length so affected by his conversation, as to be constrained, as it were, to imitate his example. In a short time this *beautiful model* of christian piety engaged his whole attention; he embraced an ecclesiastical state, and became an exemplary clergyman. *Sousi* no sooner perceived that his friend was resolved to dedicate himself in earnest to the service of God, than redoubling his zeal and affection for him he omitted no opportunity of testifying his attachment to him, and convincing him of the great advantages which accompany a virtuous friendship. He encouraged him by his exhortations, and directed him by his counsels: his particular solicitude was to guard him against the inconstancy natural to young people, and those temptations to despondency, which are too frequently fatal even to such as perceive themselves called by God to a state of greater perfection. It happened that Xili, who was at that time deliberating on his vocation, opened his mind to *Sousi* and begged his advice, at the same time remarking that he felt no partiality for any state in particular, because he perceived that all were replete with difficulties and dangers. "My good friend" replied *Sousi*, "you will never fix on a state of life, if you expect to discover one which has neither difficulties nor dangers. For since our Saviour was subjected to labours and difficulties from his infancy, we must not flatter ourselves that we shall arrive at heaven by any other way than that of tribulation; but our patience will

make those tribulations meritorious;" and in order to convince me of the truth of what he said he advised me, continues Xili, "to read the chapter of the Following of Christ, which is entitled, *Of the Royal Highway of the Cross*, and to make such applications of the sentiments to myself, as my present state required."

Nevertheless, as Xili continued still undecided, and in the greatest perplexity, *Sousi* advised him, at the commencement of a vacation, to consult God in a more particular manner on this subject, during the leisure days which he would then have at his disposal; and for this purpose, to make a retreat to the house of St. Lazarus. Xili was pleased with the proposal, and promised his friend that he would embrace it: afterwards, however, imagining that many inconveniences would attend it, he deferred the execution, and exposed the reasons of this delay in a letter to *Sousi*. Among other things, he says, "that a thought has struck him, that if he made a retreat at St. Lazarus, he might perhaps be tempted to fix himself there for life, and this was a state to which his present inclinations were averse." *Sousi*, in answer, replied, "My dear friend, I am sorry to hear you are not already at St. Lazarus; and the more so, as those reasons you alledge in excuse for your delay, are the very reasons which ought to have determined you to put it in immediate execution. Would you not be very fortunate, if the making a retreat in that house should be the occasion of your discovering that it was the will of ~~heaven~~ you should continue there? You would then be-

long entirely to God, the only object deserving our attention in this life, since we were made solely for him. Such motives ought therefore never to prevent you from going to St. Lazarus, if there be room for you, and I most earnestly exhort you not to neglect this means of salvation. In retirement God frequently imparts graces, which he refuses in the midst of a dissipated world : and it is not impossible but that your salvation may depend on the good employment of ten days dedicated to the seeking the will of God with sincerity. In this affair, my good friend, you will act according as your prudence shall direct; but do not neglect to consult God by prayer; for a great deal depends on your decision. For my part I declare, that were I in your place, I would not suffer so favorable an opportunity to escape, which perhaps may never occur to you again, and which you may hereafter wish for in vain. You are well apprised that our studies, and the other occupations which distract our thoughts during the year, scarcely allow us sufficient leisure to make serious reflections on the state of our souls, and to compare the shortness of life with the endless duration of eternity : nevertheless it is absolutely necessary that we should be feelingly convinced of these great truths, in order to be enabled to struggle successfully against the torrents of the world, and to avoid the snares which are laid on every side for our destruction."

This letter was too importunate not to produce its effect. Without further deliberation Xili repaired to St. Lazarus, performed his retreat, and

reaped from it the greatest benefit. On its conclusion he immediately hastened to thank his friend for his good advice, acknowledging nevertheless that there were some points yet remaining which gave him uneasiness. "So much the better," replied *Sousi*, "for the temptations which the devil raised in your mind during the retreat, was a proof that he was enraged to see the fruit which you would acquire from it : and this again is a continuation of his malice for he is endeavouring to destroy your peace of mind and throw you into discouragement, in order to prevent the effect of the good resolutions which you have made."

This retreat completed the transformation of *Xili* into a new man. He loved piety before, but now he practised it with fervour and so perfect did he appear in the eyes of his friend, that he gave him this particular mark of his confidence: "I am sensible," says he "how much you are attached to me; it is on this consideration that I entreat you, by the friendship which subsists between us, to admonish me boldly and plainly of all the faults which you shall perceive in my conduct. I assure you that I distinguish my true friends by this candour."

Sousi however did not pretend to impose this obligation on his friends without imposing a reciprocal obligation on himself: if they were to admonish him of his faults, he likewise engaged to admonish them of theirs; and this he never failed to do on every occasion when he perceived that his remarks would be of service to them,

particularly if their salvation was in any degree concerned: his words on these occasions were dictated by the most perfect charity and humility. Thus we see that he frequently, both in his private conversation and letters, reprov'd Xili for the inordinate use of adulatory compliments, which are too often prejudicial to those to whom they are addressed. "Reflect, my friend," said he, "that when you extol any one to his face, you throw a stumbling block before him, and expose him to the temptation of vanity:" and in a letter he writes, "I have one fault to find in your manner of writing to me, which cannot excuse you in any respect. You must know then, for example, that a man of *my rank*, for these are your terms, is no more than the last of mankind; and God, by whose judgment ours ought to be regulated, makes no distinction between the man of rank and the poor man; but what did I say? he does make a distinction, for the poor man is greater in his eyes than the man of rank. Let me entreat you therefore, to erase from your papers such unmeaning compliments; and be assured that you will give me more pleasure, if you write in a more friendly manner."

I must now describe a kind of spiritual commerce which *Sousi* established between himself and friends, and which, if adopted between all friends, would not only increase their store of merits, but prove a mutual incitement to piety. It consisted in a reciprocal agreement to offer up to God for each other, either a prayer, or an act of mortification, a communion, or any other work

of piety. This he would frequently say, is an excellent kind of commerce, as by this means we are equally enriched, not only by what we give to others, but by what we receive from them: "I entered into an agreement with him," says the Abbé Flamanville, "the advantages of which were wholly on my side. We mutually promised to offer up for each other all the good works which we should perform during life, and to assist each other by our prayers after death. We ratified this friendly compact on the feast of the Nativity of the B. Virgin. He offered me to God, I did the same for him, and we renewed this mutual offering every time we communicated." *Sousi* writes to this effect in one of his letters to his friend. "Let me always share as a brother in your prayers and good works, and you may depend on an equal return from me: I shall receive the holy communion to-morrow, and shall offer it up for you as well as for myself."

Sousi had, not only the art of instilling the love of virtue into his friends, but his communications with others were a source of edification to all who enjoyed the happiness either of his conversation or acquaintance. A person could not be in his company without admiring his virtue, nor associate with him frequently without feeling a desire of imitating his example. His presence alone was a more powerful exhortation to piety than the words of others: his free and open disposition—his candour, sincerity, easy address, (the effect of a good education) but above all, an inexhaustible fund of charity for his neighbour, conciliated a general esteem, and won every heart.

His charity dictated to him, in the first place, to abstain from every remark which could in the least hurt the feelings of those with whom he conversed, or affect the character of those of whom others were speaking. His invariable rule was, to undertake the defence of the absent who were accused, and never to give full credit to the scandals related of them, although they were declared to be of the greatest notoriety. His friends, Flamanville and Xili, inform us, that sometimes they related to him facts which were scandalously notorious, and imagined that they had put him under a kind of necessity of censuring the unhappy authors; but even on those occasions he had the address to turn the most favourable side to view, and in such a manner as not only not to injure christian charity in the slightest degree, but to give the most edifying example of the exercise of that amiable virtue. "During the whole period of our acquaintance," says the Abbé de Flamanville, "I never heard him speak of the failings of any one, nor even mention their most public faults. So scrupulous was his concern for the reputation of his neighbour, that it occasioned me to notice the two following remarks, which however severe the criticism, can hardly be called detraction: the first was when Mr. Xili devoted himself seriously to the service of God, he then said to me, *pray as earnestly as you can, I entreat you, for our friend Xili, for he is much altered since his retreat.* The other was at the commencement of an illness, when having related to me the orders of the physician, commanding

him to eat meat on days of abstinence, he described his visit in these terms: "*My physician has just left me; he said, I am happy to find that your pulse is improved: the good man thought that he had felt it, but I assure you he did no such thing.*" These were the only occasions on which the least shadow of detraction ever escaped his lips.

This amiable model of charity was as eager to embrace every opportunity of speaking in favour of his neighbour, as he was solicitous to avoid every remark injurious to his reputation: the good, moreover, which he said he always believed. Altho' so clear sighted with respect to his own failings, he was blind to the defects of others, and sometimes even to the most glaring. To judge from his words, every one was perfect except himself: and if on any occasion he was obliged to form a comparison between himself and others, he always placed himself in a degree far inferior to those of whom he spoke. He was not satisfied with merely speaking *well* of a person, but he spoke always in the superlative degree: such a fellow-student was *extremely clever*, such a one *a most valuable friend*, such another *a most prudent young man*. He spoke in the same terms of his other acquaintance. The servants even, as well those of his father as of the college, and other families where he visited, were all in his eyes valuable dependents: some for their civility, others for their discretion, others for their simplicity, and those who had the least to recommend them, were at least valuable for

their fidelity. "His brother Maurice," says the Abbé de Flamanville, "who eagerly embraced every opportunity of exercising his patience, by his troublesome importunities, and particularly by interrupting us whenever he saw us together, was little intitled to the commendation of *Sousi*; he nevertheless was not excluded, but was treated with the most marked attention, and almost with respect, on account of his quality of elder brother. Perceiving the authority which age gave him over his brother, he sometimes imposed commands on him which even a servant would have refused to execute: *Sousi* however obeyed without demur. I have frequently admired the equanimity and unalterable patience wherewith he supported the importunities of his brother, on occasions when I thought that his peace required he should at least pretend to be angry."

Let it not be supposed (from so uncommon a servility to an elder brother) that *Sousi* was either of such a weak mind, or phlegmatic disposition, as to be insensible of wrongs: quite the reverse—his penetration and discernment were above the common level, and he far outshone others of the same age, by the superiority of his abilities. But in his social intercourse with others, he lost sight of every other quality which he possessed except a mild condescension to their will, in hopes of gaining an ascendancy over them, in order to lead them into the paths of piety and salvation. In fact, it would have been an arduous task long to resist the mild insinuating submission, and well-timed exhortation of *Sousi*; and the impres-

sion which they made on his brother Maurice, although concealed for a few years, was deep and lasting. This giddy young man, whom we now behold thoughtless and dissipated, afterwards became a great servant of God ; and he himself acknowledged that it was to the moving example and amiable virtues of his brother he was indebted for the wonderful change which the grace of God had operated in him.

The modesty and humility of *Sousi* added a superior lustre to his other accomplishments. Although his information was great, considering his age, and could deliver his sentiments with ease and elegance, yet he never attempted to engross the conversation in society to himself, or much less endeavour to make an ostentatious parade of his learning, or display of the superiority of his abilities. He was always more ready to attend to others than to speak himself. It was his invariable rule never to interrupt a fellow-student, or even an inferior whilst speaking ; but on the contrary, if interrupted by others, *Sousi* would break off his sentence and listen to them with attention. This rudeness in conversation, of which young people are so frequently guilty, and which arises as much from want of thought as from a defective education, *Sousi*, bore as patiently in others, as he was severe in repressing it in himself.

The pleasure which this amiable young man felt in acts of kindness and benevolence was truly admirable. He never waited till he was asked, but generously studied to discover, and immedi-

ately to perform every thing which he thought would give pleasure and satisfaction to others. His conduct on these, as well as on all other occasions, was animated by the purest motives. Perceiving that a person of his acquaintance, who was infirm, and of a capricious and disagreeable temper, was fond of his company, he made him frequent visits, although he knew that his conversation would be both irksome and uninteresting. There was nothing which he was not ready to do, if by it he could but prevent the most trifling mortification to the lowest of men. "Finding him one day," says the Abbé de Flamanville, "busily employed in cleaning his shoes, I expressed my surprise that he should condescend to such a humiliating office, as he had a servant to wait on him." "I was afraid," replied he, "that *Constans* (the name of his servant) would be reprimanded, were it observed that my shoes were not properly cleaned, and should be glad to prevent him that mortification."

But the charity of *Sousi* blazed forth with increased lustre, when a prospect presented itself of alluring a fellow-student to the paths of virtue, or withdrawing him from any particular failing to which he was subject. His first step was to recommend him to God, both in his prayers and communions. He then informed his friends of the task he had undertaken, and concerted with them the means best calculated to insure success. A private interview was the next object to be obtained. If he resided not in the college, a friend was commissioned to introduce him to him; and

as may be supposed, little entreaty was necessary to prevail on a person of inferior rank to accept the offer of commencing acquaintance with the son of a minister, *Sousi* received him in the most affectionate manner; and by his engaging and familiar conversation, generally prepossessed him in his favour at the first interview. At the second visit, he manifested more particularly his friendly disposition, and, as far as he was able, excited reciprocal sentiments in the breast of the young man. In a short time he opened his whole heart to him, and expatiated in the most engaging language, on the happiness arising from youth spent in innocence. *Pious souls only* can paint in appropriate colours the charms of virtue, and *pure lips alone* can describe the sweets of innocence: *Sousi*, whose piety was equal to the task, spoke in such exalted terms on the advantages of a well-spent youth—enlarged with such unction on the sweet peace which it imparts to the soul, and depicted in such glowing colours its ravishing delights, that he in a manner constrained the unhappy delinquent to open his eyes to his real state, and endeavour to *regain* what he had *lost*, by the tears of *sincere repentance*. He varied the subjects of his exhortations according to the spiritual necessities of the individual: to one he exposed the danger which frequently attends imprudent connections;—to another, the baneful effects which arises from a fondness for theatrical representations;—to another, the far more pernicious effects which are occasioned by the reading of idle or immoral books;—in a word,

he described to all the dreadful state of a soul that has forsaken God, and delivered herself up to the tyranny of corrupt nature.

My readers perhaps may imagine that no young man could resist such pressing, such tender solicitations; but the contrary was sometimes the case. *Sousi*, however, whose only motive was the greater glory of God, in whose eyes purity of intention is the chief merit, remained perfectly calm and resigned, whether his pious enterprise succeeded or not; or rather he considered that he had perfectly succeeded, as far as concerned himself, by the mere act of endeavouring to procure the greater glory of God, and the salvation of a soul. Never was he heard to censure or complain of any one, not even of those who refused to listen to his charitable remonstrances, or yield to his pressing solicitations. On no occasion did he lose his temper, or assume the least harshness or severity. If he had to deal with a young man of a conceited and inflexible temper, he ventured not to contend the point with him, nor to subdue him as it were by force: but after having mildly pointed out the parts of his conduct which were contrary to the dictates of reason and religion, he resigned the task of his reformation into the hands of God, and prayed for him.

With such discreet and virtuous dispositions, *Sousi* was not exposed to any disagreeable incidents, nor liable to meet with obstacles too great to prevent the exercise of his charity; more than once, indeed, by his patient perseverance, he reclaimed those, who at the commencement, ridi-

culed his zeal. He dreaded even the very shadow of enmity ; and frequently said, that it was inconceivable to him how a person could continue at variance with another. A young man with whom he had been connected for a long time, and who enjoyed his fullest confidence, betrayed the trust reposed in him, and even published the secret artifices which he had employed to win the affections of his fellow-students, and reclaim them to the paths of virtue ; on which account his schemes were frustrated, and many projects which he had set on foot, and which promised to be successful, were rendered abortive. His friends, and in particular Xili, advised him by all means to break off all connection with a person who could be guilty of such a breach of confidence, but in vain ; altho' he acknowledged that the young man, whom he only called *indiscreet*, whilst his friends bestowed on him the epithet *perfidious*, had wounded his feelings in the most tender part, he added : "we ought to submit to the will of Providence, who permitted him to do what he has done ; he shall experience no mark of resentment or coolness from me ; and by the assistance of God I will continue on the same cordial terms with him as before."— "As he perceived," says Xili, who relates this incident, "that my sentiments were far different from his, he conjured me to reflect maturely on the christian doctrine of forgiveness, and to treat the person who had betrayed us with the same cordiality and affection as if nothing had happened." Thus did Sousi labour to overcome

evil with good. Nothing could repress the ardour of his charity ; nothing could diminish his zeal for the sanctification of his fellow-creatures ; and as on the occasion above mentioned his first plans were frustrated by a false friend, he concerted others which were rendered successful by his patience and perseverance.

Great as the zeal of *Sousi* was for the reformation of the students at large of the university of Paris, it was in a particular manner exerted with success at the seminary of St. Sulpicius ; humility however forbad him to suppose that his endeavours were productive of any good. His chief object in obtaining an introduction to the members of that seminary was, to excite himself to greater fervour by their example, but the advantage was on their side ; for the supereminent piety of *Sousi* was a subject of edification to the whole community. Mr. Tronson, at that time Superior-General of the congregation,* was much prepossessed in favour of a young man, of whom report had spoken so highly ; but at the first visit he perceived that his reputation was not equal to his merit : this he declared to the Abbé de Flamanville, by whom *Sousi* had been introduced to him, and he expressed a desire at the same time of seeing him at the seminary as often as possible, for he was fully convinced that his presence would be of great service to the whole community. His expectations were not deceived, for *Sousi* eagerly sought connections among the

* The seminary of St. Sulpicius, founded by F. Olier, in 1642, was intended as a nursery for pious missionaries.—Trans.

students, and in order to obtain edification from them, immediately turned the conversation to pious subjects. "How happy is your situation," he would say, in being thus removed at a distance from the scandals of the world, and fixed in a house where every thing invites you to the service of God and the practice of good works. Here without solicitude, or any other care than your own welfare, you have only to form a good resolution in order to spend the day well: for every hour has its respective duty; and every duty you fulfil, is sanctified by the virtue of obedience." Every word from *Sousi* made a deep impression, because they proceeded from the heart; and the pleasure they received from his conversation, was equalled only by their astonishment to hear a young layman enlarge with such feeling on the benefits arising from the life of retirement which they led in order to prepare themselves for the priesthood. The Abbé de Flamanville relates, that he knew several young men who, on their first entrance into the seminary, were so disgusted with their situation as to have deemed it insupportable, and actually formed the resolution of leaving it: but after they had heard *Sousi* speak with such enthusiasm on the happiness of their state, they saw it in a different point of view—they banished every irksome thought—applied with avidity to the study of their vocation—and became solicitous only to correspond with it.

The sentiments of *Sousi* respecting the clerical state were such as only the most enlightened

and lively faith could dictate. He beheld in every minister of the altar a living image of Jesus Christ, and he supposed that they were all animated with the virtues and spirit of their Divine Model. He concluded that every one who aspired to the sacerdotal dignity must be as spotless and perfect as human nature would admit; and, on this account, he showed the greatest respect to all who by receiving the tonsure, were initiated for holy orders—a respect which was calculated to fill them with the highest veneration for the holy state to which they aspired. So sincerely and deeply were these sentiments impressed on his mind, that the pious remarks which they drew from him, were subjects both of astonishment and humility to his friends. On one occasion, being at the seminary, he paid a visit to the Abbé de Robien, who was then sub-deacon. On his leaving the apartment, the Abbé insisted on lighting him down stairs, and, notwithstanding his remonstrances, attended him to the door. *Sousi*, the first time that he saw Flamanville after this incident, spoke of the conduct of the Abbé de Robien, as a total subversion of the rules of order: “The Abbé de Robien, I replied,” says Flamanville, “has committed no great crime; he did no more than what civility required.” “What!” rejoined *Sousi*, “do you think that it was not contrary to the rules of order, that a sub-deacon, who is deputed by the church to carry the sacred vessels to the altar, should carry a light before me, a mere layman? I assure you that such a condescension appears to me shocking, and con-

trary to all civility ; I was mortified and confounded."

Although the profound humility of *Sousi* prevented him from aspiring to the dignity of the priesthood, he nevertheless spoke with raptures on the happiness of the chosen few whom heaven favoured with that sublime vocation. He considered no situation comparable to that of a young man, whom the spirit of God had placed in a seminary, and animated with a desire of labouring to attain perfection, in hopes of being hereafter a co-operator with Jesus Christ in the great work of the redemption of the world. His pious remarks on this subject excited the most salutary reflections in the mind of every ecclesiastic, even the most fervent, not excepting those who were advanced to the priesthood. "One of the most pious and ancient members of the community," says the Abbè de Flamanville, "once returned me public thanks for introducing *Sousi* to his acquaintance, and begged as a favour that I would prevail on him to pay him a visit as often as possible ; for I declare, said he, that for the ten years that I have resided here, nothing I have seen or heard ever affected me so much as the conversation and piety of that good young man."

No sooner was his merit known in the seminary, than every member was eager to possess the happiness of his company. At first, his visits were confined to the time allotted for recreation ; but, afterwards, his friends informed him, that on certain festivals peculiar to the house, his com-

pany would be agreeable during the whole day, and assured him that the Principal had given his consent: he accepted the offer with thanks, and considered it as a singular favour. Never did he experience greater pleasure than on those days. He attended every duty of the community, and was highly delighted with the pleasing occupations of a college life. Through every part of the day his conduct was a subject of edification to that exemplary body of men, but his behaviour in church was affecting beyond description. There it was that his constant watchfulness over himself, his profound recollection during the divine office, and the fervour of his devotion to the B. Sacrament, displayed the heavenly sentiments of his soul, and filled the most obdurate hearts with respect and veneration.

The same saint-like deportment was remarked in every church where he had the happiness of pouring forth his soul before God. "From him I learnt," says Flamanville, "how a Christian ought to conduct himself in the holy temple. When I accompanied him to the abbey of Joui, I always chose a place in the church where I could behold him at pleasure. Turning my eyes towards him was alone sufficient to excite the flame of devotion in my soul. In like manner the religious of Joui have assured me, that they never experienced such fervour in prayer as when they beheld him at his devotions."

One thing alone was painful to *Sousi* when he visited the seminary, and this was the particular civilities which were paid to him. He was mor-

tified, for example, when in the refectory something more was placed before him than what was provided for the other collegians. He thought himself too much honoured in being allowed to take a seat amongst ecclesiastics, and in being admitted; as he sometimes expressed himself, into the society of the saints, little thinking that no one could do greater honour to such a society than himself. However, his eyes alone were shut to his own merits, for every other person was convinced he always possessed virtues which would have adorned the most eminent clergyman.

His zeal for the salvation of souls knew no bounds, and it might with propriety be held forth as a model to those who had devoted their lives to that particular service. We have already seen with what ingenious charity he laboured to infuse the love of virtue into the minds of the young men of the same age as himself, whose confidence he had gained. He afterwards gave a greater latitude to the efforts of his zeal. Next to his fellow-students and friends, none seemed to have greater claims on his charitable endeavours than the children of the poor, and particularly the most destitute and abandoned. A number of these wretched objects, who were chiefly chimney-sweepers, allured, some by his charitable alms, others by the desire of instruction, assembled together every day at the Rheims College, and placed themselves at a little distance from the philosophical lecture-room, which *Sousi* frequented. *Sousi*, immediately after the lecture, hastened to them, and making them repeat

the lesson in the Catechism which he had given the day before, explained it, and by questioning them after his explanation, assured himself that they understood its meaning. Before he dismissed them, he gave an alms to each; to those who had been most diligent, he gave the greatest, To those who could read, he gave a trifle more. in order that they should assist the youngest, and in proportion to the progress of their pupils, he increased their little salary. Thus did this amiable young man infuse a knowledge of the importance of salvation into these poor children, and teach them to sanctify their painful labours, and unite themselves to God by prayer: he abandoned them not till he had placed them in a proper state for their first communion, and made them sensible of the value and necessity of the graces which the sacraments confer.

The same charitable institution which *Sousi* had established at the Rheims college, was by his means established at the college of Laon: and God gave such success to his zeal in favour of these hitherto abandoned children, that after his decease particular care was taken of them. From that time were seen, not indeed students and laics, but clergymen, inheritors of his zeal, paying particular attention to the little chimney-sweepers, known by the name of *Savoyards*; and at this day the seminary of foreign missions, and several parish priests, give them public instructions, and provide them with the means of making a retreat.

The instruction of the poor was the privileged

devotion of Sousi, who endeavoured to infuse the same spirit into his friends, to whom he proposed the *example* of the *Saviour of the World*, who assembled the little children around him, blessed them, and instructed them according to their capacity. "He engaged me," says Xili, "to undertake the charge of instructing four of these children, two of whom were to make their first communion. Being with him on another occasion, a poor woman with two children of a moderate age accosted us, and requested alms. He immediately asked her, whether she had taken care to have them instructed in the principles of religion, and whether they knew their catechism. Upon her replying in the negative, he commissioned me to find out a schoolmaster that they might be taught to read, and instructed in their religion. I complied with his request, and put them under a master, to whom he paid till his death the stipulated sum for their schooling." In a letter to the Abbé Flamanville, *Sousi* writes as follows: "If you be concerned for the spiritual necessities of the poor, as I believe you are, I advise you to read the sixth chapter of St. Luke: you will there discover a fund of instruction on that point. That chapter contains every thing which can administer consolation to the suffering Christian: and it seems to me, that a person in affliction cannot attentively peruse it without being convinced that he has more reason to rejoice than to be sorrowful."

Sousi, who took the greatest delight in conveying instruction to the poor, suffered no opportu-

nity of so doing to escape him. During the time of the vacations, which he regularly spent at the Abbey of Joui, no room was apparently left for the exercise of his zeal, as all the children of the village attended public instructions: he, however, selected those who were not favoured with the brightest, and having assembled them in his apartment, gave them additional instructions: and by his patience and mildness succeeded in teaching them the principal mysteries of religion. The labours which he endured in order to instil the science of salvation into the minds of poor children, reminded him of the gratitude he owed to Divine Providence for the good education which he himself had been enabled to receive, by being born of parents endued with piety and in affluent circumstances.

Sousi did not confine his charity for the poor to instructions alone; he also assisted them as much as in his power, and with joy distributed among them the money which was at his disposal. He never would indulge the least unnecessary expense, which he considered as a kind of robbery of the poor suffering members of Jesus Christ. When his friends solicited him to purchase any trifling articles, or to indulge himself in any of those amusements which usually afford the greatest pleasure to young people, his constant reply was, "I have every necessary, and what I possess over and above ought to be applied to the purchase of necessities for the poor." Although he distributed his charities with discretion, he nevertheless observed no

bounds when he met with real objects of distress. To the begging poor, who are seldom the most deserving of compassion, his ordinary alms was only ~~one~~ halfpenny, except he had reason to suppose that they were not professed beggars. When a pauper in real distress was pointed out to him, he enlarged his alms even to five shillings, and sometimes more. "One day as I was walking with him," says Xili, "a woman, meanly clad, addressed him, and described her distress in the most affecting terms; her behaviour betrayed no symptoms of imposture. She was indebted, she said, ~~fifteen~~ shillings for her lodgings, the payment of which was instantly required, and she had no means of procuring the money. *Sousi* immediately gave her the money, and the pleasure which he felt on the occasion was not inferior to hers."

As long as *Sousi* had money in his possession, he never refused an alms to a poor person; but when once his stock was exhausted, he never asked for an extra allowance, which he might have easily obtained by applying to his father, who refused him nothing. This eagerness on the one hand to supply the necessities of the poor, and on the other hand his refusal to require a farther allowance, was a kind of mystery in his conduct, which a few only of his friends could explain. The reason was, that *Sousi* with the love of the poor united likewise a love of poverty in himself, which he was eager to practise as far as possible, after he had exercised the virtue of charity. Thus when he had distributed all

the money allowed him for his private use, if a poor person asked an alms, he consoled himself with the thought that his incapacity to relieve his distress created some resemblance between him and his Saviour, who was the friend of the poor, and poor himself. Most of the letters which he wrote to his friends, shew how completely his affections were detached from the mammon of the world. One of the reasons which made him envy the lot of Flamanville, who had formed the resolution of devoting himself to the foreign missions, was, "because he would have it in his power to imitate with ease the poverty of Jesus Christ, and would frequently be under the necessity of doing it."

The attention with which he studied, not only the example, but the doctrine of his Divine Model, inspired him with something more than contempt for riches, he dreaded them as one of the greatest obstacles to salvation; and when his dear father was placed at the head of the financial department, the increase of revenue, and the honour which accrued to his family from that appointment, would not have created one agreeable sensation in his mind, had he not beheld the christian use to which this virtuous minister applied it, viz. administering comfort and relief to the most wretched class of the community.

Although born to affluence and splendour, he never could be tempted to admire or approve of the pomp and luxury which reigned among the great; on the contrary, he considered it as an insult offered to part of the human race, and to

Jesus Christ himself. He felt a real mortification in being obliged to ride in a carriage; and, in order to avoid it, he pleaded every excuse: "the exercise of walking," he said, "was beneficial to his health, and he preferred walking to any other mode of travelling."—"Very frequently," says the Abbé de Flamanville, "he declared to me, that he was never more pleased than when permitted to come to the seminary on foot. What a shame! he would say, that Christians should decorate brute beasts with such costly trappings, and refuse necessary cloathing to their fellow-creatures!" The pomp and magnificence of the metropolis furnished him with continual reflections on the abuse of riches, and the dangers which attend the possession of them. Whilst he was walking one day with Xili, a lady in very rich attire passed by; turning to his friend he said: "Don't you think that with the money which might have been spared in the purchase of that dress, food might have been provided for many poor creatures, who are at this moment starving in the garrets and cellars of Paris? These victims of misery will, at the last day, raise a loud voice against the rich, whose extravagant luxuries have consumed their substance."

Sousi was not satisfied with appropriating in favour of the poor the scanty means which were in his power, and instructing them as far as his abilities would permit; but as he knew by the light of faith that Jesus presents himself to us in the persons of the poor, and considers every thing done to them as done to himself, there was

no good office which he was not glad to perform for them, and which he did not readily perform when the opportunity presented itself. During his vacations, which, as I have said, he spent at Joui, we have frequently seen him, says the Abbé de Flamanville, moved to compassion at the sight of those unfortunate distressed infants, whose ulcerated heads bore witness to their misery; we have seen him assemble together these wretched objects, and daily with his own hands dress their most loathsome sores. "This work of charity I confess," continues the Abbé, "at first disgusted me beyond measure, and made my very blood run cold. I knew indeed that I was on no account obliged to practise it; but at length his unremitting charity secretly upbraided my cowardice, and so effectually conquered my repugnance as to force me in a manner to follow his example."

When *Sousi* either bestowed an alms on a poor person, or did them any other good office, he always addressed them in the mildest terms, and suggested, in a few words, the means by which they might reap the greatest benefit from the state in which it had pleased Providence to place them. An incident, which places the perfection to which his charity had arrived in a strong light, is thus related by Flamanville. "Full of diffidence in his own judgment, and fearing lest he should deceive himself in the exercise even of the purest virtues, it was his wish to submit all his actions to the opinion of his director. He generally went to confession every

Saturday. I advised him to take that opportunity, as he had no other, to confer with his director on those points which were likely to occasion any difficulty of decision in his own mind. Depend upon it, my friend, he replied, I should do wrong if I followed your advice. You are well acquainted that a multitude of good women from the square *Maubert* every Saturday crowd the confessional of Mr. Polot. They abandon their shops in order to prepare themselves for the holy sacrament, and they cannot be absent long, lest they should lose their customers. Should I spend too much time with my director, these poor people would be obliged to return home without receiving the benefit of the sacrament of penance; now ought I not prefer their salvation to my own consolation."

A young man who was thus studiously attentive to do good to every one, and desirous of giving edification to his neighbour in every action, was undoubtedly less exposed than other young men of his age to the dangers of the world: *Sousi* nevertheless was continually alarmed at the idea of his own weakness, and dreaded nothing so much as the least admission of the love of earthly things into his heart. "I entreat you writes he to one of his fellow-students, to favour me with your prayers, for I stand in need of your assistance in order to be enabled to withdraw my affections from the things of the world." He took every precaution to prevent his mind from being contaminated, either by the example or false maxims of worldlings. As there were many

visits which he was indispensably obliged to make, he loved to be accompanied by his brother Maurice, whose volatile disposition and aversion to restraint urged him to take leave as soon as possible; and as it was his delight to make reflections in favour of every one, he said of his brother, that he possessed the good quality of not being able to endure long the society of people of the world. He generally left the burthen of the conversation to him; and after he had paid his respects to the company, he spoke only when he was addressed by another person. This reservedness he excused to himself under the plausible pretext that it was his duty to pay deference to his elder brother, and suffer him to speak. The opinion formed of them by the dissipated world was, that *Sousi* thought too much before he spoke, and that Maurice, who often spoke without thinking, was very agreeable. The silence which *Sousi* observed on these occasions was not without profit on his side; and *Flamenville*, who suspected how his thoughts were employed, asked him how he amused himself when he was necessitated to attend large parties, and continue there for a long time. "In order to avoid fatigue," he replied, "I entertain myself with the royal Prophet." He knew all the Psalms by heart, and according to the existing circumstances he selected sentences, and meditated on them. If he witnessed the vain pomp and splendour of the world; he said in his heart, *turn away my eyes, O Lord, that they look not on vanity*. If he heard conversation little suited

to the principles of the Gospel, he said: *they have related fables to me, but they are not as thy law, O Lord.* Thus, on every occasion, he made use of the arms of faith for his protection against the attacks of his spiritual enemies.

Although *Sousi* paid so little attention to the ways of the world, yet it was impossible he should not be impressed with at least a confused idea of its profligacy: but his piety made that a subject of pious reflections, which would have been a subject of scandal to others. "The only benefit," says he, in a letter to Xili, which can be reaped from a commerce with the world, is the opportunity which it presents of discovering its delusions, and considering how difficult it is to attain salvation. For on every side we behold people addicted to the grossest failings, wedded to the things of the earth, indifferent about salvation, and living, as if there were neither a heaven to gain, nor a hell to escape. . . . Yes, I assure you, the world becomes worse daily. Their sentiments and their conversation bespeak, not Christians, but men who imagine that they were created merely for the earth."

But above all other scenes of dissipation and worldly pleasure the voluptuous court of Louis XIV. was far pre-eminent, and to whom could it be more open than to the son of a respected minister? *Sousi*, however, took no pleasure in it. What would have been the height of ambition to any other young man, I mean an appointment in the king's suite during a tour of pleasure to *Mainebleau*, give him very little satisfaction:

the thought of being a party in all the splendid and enchanting amusements of the court was insufficient to attract his attention. On the contrary, it appears from his letters, that he dreaded the tour very much before-hand;—was dissatisfied with it during its continuance, and considered himself as it were in banishment in the midst of every pleasure and delight that the world could afford. On the point of setting out on one of these parties, he wrote as follows to his friend Flamanville: “I write to you, my dear friend, in great affliction, for last night we received information that we were to depart for Fountainebleau to-morrow. You perhaps are well convinced of the dangers which attend these parties; and to what scandals a person is exposed, who, like me, is drawn into a state of dissipation by the least trifle. Ah! if you were my companion on this occasion, I would shelter myself under the covert of your wings! How happy should we be if we had it in our power to spend the remainder of the vacation at Joui! We should be exposed to no dangers in that happy solitude. Pray therefore for me, my dear friend; your prayers will obtain for me the grace of God, of which I stand much in need, in order that this tour might not be more injurious than profitable to my soul. On my side I will preserve as great a watchfulness over myself as possible; for on these occasions we must be particularly vigilant, and earnest in our supplications to God for assistance, as the devil is then exerting his utmost efforts to seduce and more ardently begs permission of God.”

that effect: *expetivit Satanas ut cribraret vos sicut triticum.*" Satan hath desired to have you, that he might sift you as wheat. Luke xxii. 31.

On their return from Fountainebleau, he again wrote to his friend: "I informed you in my last that we were on the point of setting out on a disagreeable expedition; *disagreeable I assure you*, since I was to witness the *egregious irreligion* of the people in those parts. My brother Maurice having expressed a desire of being present at the king's mass, our father permitted us to go. I never was more surprised than when I beheld the behaviour of the people on that occasion. Imagine to yourself a church thronged with people, where no one pays the *least attention*, either to the priest or the altar, where every one converses as freely as in the open street, where every one pays the utmost respect to the king, and the most insulting irreverence to God. But I will dwell no longer on this scene of scandal:—it was shocking beyond description!"

About the same time he gave an account of this expedition to Xili in the following terms: "We have lately made the small tour which I mentioned in my last. God be praised, our stay there was very short, we were only twenty-four hours at Fountainebleau. It was not necessary to remain there any longer to be enabled to witness the total decay of piety; it is the same wherever the court resides. There may be seen one continued scene of dissipation; people spend their whole lives in pleasures, sleep and play.

They are present at mass with less attention than at the opera, and the king is more adored than God. This description you may perhaps think exaggerated: for it is hard to conceive how men, who were made to save their souls by walking in the footsteps of the humble, poor, mortified, and suffering Jesus, can live in this manner. It is however a melancholy truth, my dear friend: they live at court as if they had no soul to save—no death to suffer—no God—no eternity. All therefore that good Christians can do, when they are necessitated to frequent their society, is to reflect on the goodness and forbearance of God for not hurling the thunders of his vengeance on men who thus dishonour his name, and are so rebellious to his love.”

PART THIRD.

In the two preceding parts, *Sousi* has exhibited before your eyes a perfect model both of fervour in the service of God, and of christian prudence in his commerce with the world; it now remains that we examine his conduct in the discharge of the duties which he owed to himself: in which likewise we shall find that he was equally attentive to the obligations of his state, and to the acquisition of every endowment of which his age was susceptible. Being possessed of good nat-

ral abilities, he was early and feelingly convinced of the necessity of devoting them to the purposes for which they were given him by God; and he had resolution of mind sufficient to regulate his conduct according to the ideas which his tender reason had formed of the importance of salvation.

The letters of this virtuous young man which we have already quoted, and those which will appear in the sequel of this work, sufficiently justify the character which M. Boivin (the historian of his father) had given him, viz: that he was a youth of refined talents. His memory was remarkable. This greatly facilitated the study of literature; but the use to which he most delighted to apply it was the science of the saints. He knew by heart the most remarkable passages of the New Testament, and most of the Psalms. He spoke with ease and precision on the various subjects which are given as exercises to young men. His conversation was pleasing, and his friends listened to him with delight, not so much because he expressed himself in an agreeable manner, as because they were assured that he was candid and sincere, and that an untruth never escaped his lips. They remarked that he never was eager to deliver his sentiments in conversation, the reason of which may perhaps have been, that he either wished to receive information from others, or that he was afraid of falling into the faults to which those are inevitably exposed who speak much. He never unbosomed himself, nor spoke with warmth (except in company of some friend or fellow-student, who were indebted to

him for a reformation of their conduct) when he conversed with them on the happiness of a virtuous soul, and on the delights experienced in the service of God.

The uncommon facility wherewith he learnt his tasks, did not degenerate into an habit of idleness, nor prevent him from applying to study with indefatigable industry. Not content with a superficial knowledge of things, every subject which he studied he examined to the bottom, and every essay that he composed he perfected and polished to the utmost of his power. Although he was answerable for the employment of his time, to his tutor alone, to whom he had been long united by the strongest bands of friendship, yet he scrupled to lose a moment allotted for study, being as attentive to the order prescribed for his different exercises, as if it had been prescribed by God himself, never suffering any excuse to prevent his immediate application to them. If he chanced to be in company, when the hour of study arrived, he instantly retired;—if with his friends, he immediately took leave;—if in the midst of amusements, he desisted that instant. “The only occasion,” says the Abbé de Flamanville, “that we ever saw him in a great hurry was, when the hour for study was at hand.”

Talents thus applied must necessarily make a wonderful proficiency. *Sousi* advanced in his studies with such rapidity, that at the *tender age of fifteen* he finished his course of rhetoric, when his father, Claude le Peletier, than whom no one could be a more competent judge, declared that

he was then capable of entering on the higher studies of logic and philosophy; nor was he deceived, for *Sousi* was even distinguished above his companions. At that time philosophy was the first class that presented to young men of talents an opportunity of displaying their abilities before the university; for the public compositions and premiums, which called into notice the talents of the younger students, were not then instituted*. *Sousi*, during his course of natural philosophy, at the end of which he died, was selected by his professor, as the student most capable of doing him honor by the defence of a general thesis on philosophy.

The study of philosophy, which too often extinguishes the spirit of piety by its engrossing all the faculties of the mind, produced a contrary effect in *Sousi*. Viewing on one side, those fruitless researches after truth—those endless disputes of the schools—those doubts and fluctuations of opinion of both masters and scholars on certain points;—and on the other hand, the grand principles of philosophy, the *indubitable* consequences deduced from them, and the great discoveries to which they have led; our young philosopher concluded from this contrast of certainties and doubts, that he alone is *truly wise*, who humbly submits his weak powers to the *all-knowing wisdom of the Deity* on those points, the proofs of which he has concealed from our view, and who offers him the tribute of gratitude

*Vide *Virtuous Scholar*, p. 92, 1st ed.—p. 79, 2d ed.

for those truths which he has vouchsafed to discover to us.

Thus *Sousi* did not neglect *the science of the saints* at a time when his studies were applied to the sciences of the learned ; and while the lessons of his professor obliged him to dive into the secrets of nature, and contemplate its wonders, a study which he found particularly pleasing and attractive, he at the same time made a secret study of the more wonderful operations of grace ; knowing that if God permits the mind of man to ascend even to the firmament, and describe the courses of the heavenly bodies, he likewise commands him, in quality of a Christian, to descend into his own heart by faith, in order to study and regulate its motions.

With such happy dispositions, whilst the progress of *Sousi* in the paths of virtue became a matter of surprise and astonishment to his fellow students, his particular friends were only edified and encouraged, knowing under what master he studied the science of christian perfection. "My dear friend," said he to the Abbé de Flam-anville, "we have an infallible model to imitate in every circumstance of life. If obliged to study—to pray—to practise obedience—or exercise any other virtue painful to corrupt nature, let us consider how our divine Saviour fulfilled these very duties which he imposed on himself for our instruction, when he assumed the nature of man for our salvation. Whether we eat—drink—labour—or take our rest, let us always have our eyes fixed on Jesus Christ. In the midst of company,

as well as in solitude, or the retirement of our closets—in our amusements, and times of spiritual gladness, as well as in our trials and temptations—in a word, in every situation wherein we may be placed, let us put this question to ourselves: how would our divine Saviour conduct himself on this occasion? Let us then follow his example: he became our model only for our imitation.” With such sentiments as these, where is the young man that would not expand his heart to the reception of every christian virtue?

It was by an assiduous attendance at the school of this great Master, that *Sousi* acquired the spirit of meekness and humility. These virtues, so ornamental at any period of life, are particularly amiable in youth; they add a new lustre to his talents, and conciliate universal esteem. Never was he known to wrangle with a fellow-student, speak harshly, or suffer the least offensive word or gesture to escape him. If at any time he was insulted by the petulance or forwardness of others, he immediately disarmed and conciliated them by his meek replies. He forced them to blush and be ashamed of their behaviours, by the contrast which his politeness and civility formed with their rudeness and vulgarity. He took every opportunity of publishing the good qualities and virtues of others, but not once would he mention the incivilities which had been offered to him. Never was he heard to utter a single complaint against his brother Maurice, whose importunities were so intolerable.

His humility was not inferior to his meekness.

Although his familiar discourse, by the sweet unction it displayed, was a continued exhortation to all who heard him, he nevertheless assumed not the tone of a reformer, or pretended in any degree, to set himself up as the director or model of others. If he enlarged on any virtue or any failing, he always spoke as if his own spiritual advancement required that he should attain the one and correct the other. Addressing as it were his exhortations to himself, he left to others the office of applying his remarks to themselves: and by this means he corrected more abuses and failings than if he had openly assumed the character of a teacher. Although always intent on performing works the most deserving of approbation, he nevertheless would not listen to the voice of praise, and never would believe that he was entitled to any merit; for which reason the least applause gave him uneasiness. The compliments and encomiums which his prudent and pious conduct frequently extorted from others, he attributed to an excess of benevolence and civility. Sometimes he ingeniously evaded them, at other times he repelled them with as much ardour as others would repel an injury. On one occasion his brother Maurice, without reflecting on the probability of being overheard, related to Flamanville some act of piety which had much edified him, *Sousi* however overheard him, and hastened with the utmost precipitation to put a stop to their remarks. "This, says Flamanville, "is, I think, the only time that I ever saw him run."

The unfeigned and boundless humility of

Sousi was visible both in his conversation, in his exterior and in his whole deportment. We have already described the scrupulosity wherewith he practised *obedience*, the *virtue* on which humility in a young man principally depends. Instead of being puffed up with vanity on account of the superior talents which distinguished him above his fellow students, he considered them as subjects of fear and alarm. "They are gratuitous gifts of God," he would frequently say, "and we shall be obliged to render a strict account of them before his tribunal." All the letters which he wrote to his friends, are filled with expressions which could be dictated only by a heart truly humble, which considered diffidence in its own strength as its best security. At one time he is overjoyed because he is found worthy to possess the confidence of his friends;—at another time he regrets his misfortune in being deprived of their society, since on that account he is prevented from profiting by their advice and edified by their example. At other times, he entreats them to admonish him freely of his faults, which he says are innumerable; and frequently begs the favor of their prayers, in order to be enabled to preserve his innocence in the midst of the world, where a piety so weak as he pretends his to be, is exposed to the greatest dangers.

Honours and pomp, which in general are destructive of christian humility, were viewed by **Sousi** with the greatest dread. "When he was informed," says Xili, "that such and such a person was advanced to great dignities, he thought that

he was much to be pitied ; and when, on the contrary, he was informed, that a man, who had enjoyed extraordinary honours was fallen into disgrace, "God," he would say, "had conferred a signal blessing on him." When his father was called to the ministry, he felt an unfeigned grief ; and his sorrow was the more remarkable, as it formed such a contrast to the joy wherewith this circumstance had enlivened the whole family, and the congratulations which were sent from every part to the new minister. A person unacquainted with *Sousi*, would perhaps have accused him of indifference for his father, at the very moment that his heart was overflowing with the most tender effusions of filial love. Being asked, on that occasion, why he appeared sorrowful, whilst all around were inspired with mirth and joy : "I am afraid, and cannot conceal it," replied he, "I am afraid, that these honours will endanger the salvation of my dear father."

On another occasion, conversing with Flamanville on the same subject, "I think," said he, "that we decrease in strength in proportion as we increase in dignity ; my weakness was never so much put to the test as since the promotion of my father;" and in a letter to the same, he says, "It is with regret—with inexpressible regret, that I am forced to quit Joui, our dear solitude, and return to Paris to be overwhelmed by the honours and dangers of a court. Have I not reason to be afflicted ? I tremble lest the dissipation in which I live should rob me of the little virtue I possess I endeavour, to the utmost of my power, to main-

tain my ground by the aid of spiritual reading ; but my habitual occupations do not afford me so much leisure as my necessities require. Before my departure from Joui, I recommend you, as well as myself, to the protection of our Holy Mother, and I hope it will be of service to us both. Yes, my dear friend, I assure you that I stand in need of extraordinary graces, in order to be preserved uninjured by the glare of honours, which although, thanks be God, they are not reflected personally on me, nevertheless, expose me, from time to time, to the greatest danger, from which probably I shall not escape, unless by means of the prayers which you address to God in my behalf ; do not forget me, my dear friend, since you are well assured, I hope, that you have always a share in my prayers."

In another letter to his friend Xili, he displays nearly the same sentiments : " I recommend myself," said he, " to your good prayers, for they are now of greater importance to me than ever. Worldly honours are so replete with dangers, that a person must be always on his guard against them, otherwise he will be overcome. The mind insensibly becomes as enamoured of these perishable vanities as if they were real goods, and forgets that the only *real good* is that which remains for ever."

It was, as we have already remarked, with the greatest reluctance that he was obliged, either in obedience to his parents, or to avoid giving them offence, to wear, on certain days, embroidered clothes, and to have his hair dressed and pow-

dered, like other young men of his age. "This he testified to me," says Flamanville, "at our first acquaintance." His delight would have been to dress not only plain, but even like a poor man. He always took care to possess something that was old and worn, in honour of the poverty of Jesus Christ; linen, for example, when it was in his power, but more generally books, such as his *Daily Office*, and the *Following of Christ*. I procured a *New Testament*, elegantly bound, which I intended as a present for him, which he would never accept, preferring his own merely because it was old and mean. On another occasion, I made him a present of the Life of M. de Renty,* of which I had a duplicate, but I could not engage him to accept the best of the two. This was his invariable rule. He was pleased to see his brother Maurice make choice of the best, and leave him the worst. As he was at liberty to chuse the colour of his clothes, he always preferred brown, for what reason it cannot now be determined; but when the cloth was purchased, his sister, the lady of the present d'Argouges, claimed the privilege of executing the embroidery. Coming one day to visit me in this new dress, with gold and black facings, I said, in joke, "that now at least he appeared like a nobleman of consequence."—"Ah! my friend," replied he, with that amiable and sweet tone of voice which was so natural to him, "I see that this vain parade displeases you; you are in the right: but what could I do? Madam d'Argouges, who thinks

* See his life in Butler's SS. L.L. Oct. 25.

that I am too serious, was in hopes that this finery would enliven me; but I am afraid its inherent virtues are too weak for the purpose: *an ass*, although decorated with fine trappings, is *still an ass*."

We frequently see a great family name become an occasion of vanity to many young men, who is little qualified to add to its renown. The modest *Sousi*, on the contrary, would have been glad if it had been unknown to every one, that he belonged to one of the most respectable families in the kingdom. He considered himself no more entitled to praise on account of the great actions of his father and his ancestors, than to value his body on account of the rich clothes he was obliged to wear; for which reason, instead of pushing himself into notice, on account of his celebrated family, he, on the contrary, took such particular delight in being unknown, as to feel a pleasure, not merely in remaining undistinguished, but even in being harshly treated among the crowd. Having sometimes experienced that his name had been the occasion of his receiving such civilities and attentions as were offensive to his modesty, he strove to avoid them: for this reason he was resolved never to make himself known to strangers, were it even to expose him to the most humiliating and disagreeable circumstances; nay, so much importance did he attach to this resolution, that on the following occasion he chose to be deprived of the holy communion, rather than break through it, by disclosing his name.

Intending to visit the seminary of St. Sulpicius, on one of their peculiar festivals, he took the seminary of St. Nicholas on his road thither, in order to ask permission of Mr. Polot, his director, to receive the holy communion; but not finding him, he repaired to the church, and applied to three of the clergy successively; who, on acknowledging that he was not of that parish, refused to hear his confession, and advised him to apply to his own curate for a director. The last of these gentlemen addressing him in very harsh terms, said, "Good Christians apply to their own parish priests, and do not run about in quest of confessors to whom they are unknown." *Sousi*, unwilling to disclose his name, humbly submitted to this rebuke; and far from harbouring the least ill will against the clergyman, he thought him entitled to his particular esteem. The first time that he saw Flamanville after this, he related the whole affair: "I am not surprised," said he, "that God showers down such blessings on the parish of St. Nicholas-du-Chardonnet; all the clergy are wonderfully exact; they are assiduous in hearing the confessions of their parishioners, and give severe lectures to all who apply to them instead of their own pastors; this is extremely edifying. It was my duty to submit to the humiliation which I received, and I offered it up to God in lieu of the blessed Sacrament, which I could not receive." "A few days after this adventure," continues the Abbé de Flamanville, "the clergyman who had given this reception to *Sousi*, and who happened to be one of my ac-

quaintance, met me in his company, and recollecting his features, asked me, if I knew that young man? He is, replied I, a son of the Comptroller-General of the Finance, who sometimes honours me with a visit at the seminary; I then gave him a short description of his character. As *Sousi* had walked on during this short conversation, the clergyman expressed a desire to accost him and excuse his conduct, but I assured him that I would undertake the commission, and that he might be very easy respecting the sentiments which *Sousi* entertained of him."

Such a fund of humility is at once the support and evidence of uncommon piety; and even in a young man it may be depended upon as genuine and sound, if it be accompanied with circumspection and diffidence. This was the distinctive character of the piety of *Sousi*. In the midst of the world and its scandals, which he was too often necessitated to witness, he was always on his guard against the least incident that could sully the innocence of his mind, which exhibited to his fellow-students a model of the most perfect circumspection, and by a necessary consequence, of the most angelic chastity. It was particularly respecting this virtue that he extended his dread of offending God to that salutary fear, which the apostle imposed as a command on all Christians. With the view of preserving the purity of his soul undefiled by the least stain, he paid no regard to the elegance of his person, but preferred the most simple dress to any other, and despised the vain parade of earthly attire. Actu-

ated by the same motives he would never open a book which bore a suspicious appearance, and was never tempted to put his foot into a theatre, he would oftentimes say, "that he was astonished how so many Christians could frequent a place which resounded continually with expressions injurious to piety." It was likewise through a dread of sullying the fair virtue of chastity, that he kept a strict watch over his senses,—that he shut his ears to all loose discourse, or words of double meaning,—that he shuddered at the repetition of the soft impassioned accents of sensual love,—that he particularly restrained the curiosity of the eyes, and turned away his face with the same promptitude from an immodest picture, as from any other object which could tend to rob him of this precious treasure.

Numerous facts, related in the memoirs of the Abbé de Flamanville, prove that the delicacy of *Sousi* in this point was carried to the most scrupulous exactness. Such a conduct was undoubtedly entitled to the greatest applause; as it had for its object the preservation of a virtue, which a single breath would taint, the forfeiture whereof is generally attended with the loss of every other virtue in youth. An aunt, a nun, and two married sisters in Paris, were the only ladies favoured with the visits of *Sousi*. If, at the parties whereat he was obliged to attend, any ladies were present, after having paid them the civilities which politeness required, he left the office of conversing with them to others; being less apprehensive of incurring the reproach of being too reserved, than

of being over bold and confident. On two occasions only was he ever seen to converse with strangers of the other sex, and these were two poor creatures, whom he addressed in the middle of the street; the one, in order to give her fifteen shillings to enable her to discharge a debt which she owed; the other, to assure her that he would pay for the schooling and instruction of her two children. Even at home, he would not suffer any woman whatsoever to wait on him, nor would he permit them even to enter his room. During his last illness, when he stood in need of extraordinary attendance, he would not accept of their services. His faithful servant Constans performed the immediate duties of his room, and when the labour was too great for one man, he begged that a religious man of the charitable confraternity* might be permitted to assist him.

If we take a nearer view of the department of *Sousi*, we shall perceive that all his vigilance and precautions were particularly directed to the removal of every thing that could endanger his chastity, and it might be said that the whole assemblage of his other virtues were intended only for the perfection of this. But of all the means which he employed in order to escape the many rocks to which innocence is exposed amidst the present dissolution of morals, there were few (the sacraments excepted) in which he appeared to place more confidence, than the avoidance of the

* A confraternity established by St. Vincent of Paul, who made it their duty to attend the poor sick in their respective parishes.—
Trans.

occasions, and the constant practice of christian mortification. The time appointed for his residence in the gay world was to him the most insupportable : and the scenes, the most smiling and attractive to a dissipated young man, were those which filled him with the greatest alarm. His purity, like a tender flower, drooped in the midst of an infected air, and his heart was incapable of enjoying an instant of pure delight in a place where he saw that God was forgotten and often offended. It was for this reason that he so anxiously desired to quit Paris during the time of his vacation from college, and retire to the Abbey of Joui. Renewed pleasure always attended an expedition to this delightful solitude : his only occupations there were study and religious exercises, which by the generality of young men perhaps may not be accounted pleasures, but to *Sousi* nothing could be more agreeable or delightful. The time which was not devoted to study in his chamber, or to prayer in the church, he spent in a small forest adjoining the abbey. The lonely paths of this solitude invited him to breathe forth the tender affections of his heart without restraint—there he enjoyed the ineffable delight of conversing with God alone. At one time he committed a psalm to memory—at another, he read a pious book, or poured forth his soul in prayer. If in company with his friend Flamanville, God was the subject of his conversation ;—when by himself alone, he either conversed with God, or listened attentively to his voice in the interior of his soul. Every object around him

furnished abundant motives for a continual sacrifice of praise. The sun, in its majestic course, reminded him of the great Creator, whose immensity extends over all creatures and all times: the most simple flower under his foot, announced to him the most prolific power of the Almighty, who seems to sport in the multiplied production of his wonders:—the shade, which protected him from the scorching heat, represented to his mind the more than paternal goodness of his God, which is always ready to protect his favoured creature from the dangers which threaten him:—the melody of the birds reminded him of the Providence of God, which if it provides food for these helpless creatures, who neither sow nor reap, will with greater solicitude support the wants of his beloved creature *man*. If the leaves on the trees were agitated by the wind, he figured to himself the unhappy state of those weak and sensual minds who are the sport of every lawless and shameful passion. In the serenity of the air and silence of nature, he seemed to hear, in the interior of his soul, a soft sweet voice commanding him *to respect*, and inviting him *to adore* the GREAT GOD, before whom the whole universe is, as it were not. This was the employment of *Sousi* in solitude: every object contributed to his instruction; and in this manner a young man, whose heart is open to God, is enabled to find God every where, and speak to him whenever he pleases.

The letters written by *Sousi* during his vacations, and which are not dated from Joui, express

the deep regret which was occasioned by his absence from a place, where his piety received every encouragement and assistance. In a letter to his friend Xili, he says, "Since my return to Paris. I have not had a moment's leisure to entertain myself with you. We have been harassed by continual visits, which makes me regret my dear solitude at Joui. With what grief do I always take my leave of it! How much it costs me to habituate myself to the manners of Paris, when I return from Joui! Ah, how different are the two places! How little do their respective inhabitants resemble each other! At Joui all is edification; at Paris scandal is triumphant. A person may however find subjects of meditation even in Paris: for why are such multitudes deluded by empty vanities and pomp?—merely because they never seriously compare them with eternity. In this point of view, my dear friend, we see that all the splendour of the world is not only *nothing*, but a nothing replete with the greatest dangers to salvation."

In another letter to the same friend, he says, "I am very sorry to see my brother, the Abbot, depart for Joui and myself unable to accompany him. How happy is he in that retirement, while I am left a prey to the hurry and dissipation of Paris. Joui is a situation which inspires its inhabitants with a love of piety. The examples I there behold force me in a manner to live well. When I am absent from Joui, my thoughts are totally distracted; and in order to enkindle the force of devotion in my soul, I am obliged to turn my thoughts to Joui."

Sousi was not satisfied with embracing every occasion which could tend to remove the spirit of dissipation, and fix his soul in a state of recollection and peace, but he likewise found means to devote some few days every year to the more immediate concerns of his soul in a spiritual retreat.

In a letter to Flamanville, he says, "I am very desirous of making a retreat at this time; for, independently of the want I feel of it, I am afraid that a more favourable occasion than the present will not occur till next year. O what a happiness is it, my dear friend, that you reside in a seminary during the time of lent: for a person must necessarily be retired from the world and creatures, in order to meditate with due effect on the mysteries which the Church will in a short time display before us."

If, however, there existed a young man who could forego the advantages of a retreat without injury to his piety, it was Sousi: for every day was to him a day of retirement spent in the habitual recollection of the presence of God, and of the truths of salvation. I am not sparing in my quotations from his writings, for I think that they describe better the sentiments of his heart than any words of mine could do. "You admire my sentiments," says he, writing to a friend: "for my part, I think they are very mean. Ah! is it possible that sentiments can be sufficiently elevated to form a just idea of the most important of all concerns, the great concern of salvation, which nevertheless is as frequently neglected, as

if there the last that merited our attention. Besides, my dear friend, to entertain refined sentiments of virtue will profit us nothing if we do not practise them in our lives. We may however reasonably hope, that when God incites a person to meditate on virtue, he will likewise grant him grace to practise it; for when we apply our thoughts to any particular object, it insensibly gains on our affections, and stimulates us to devise the means whereby it may be accomplished. The example you have cited is a sufficient proof of the dangers to which a soul is exposed in the midst of the world, where imperfections and vices of every description are so predominant."

In another letter addressed to the same, he says: "Fifteen days are now elapsed since Mr. Joli left us in order to fulfil the will of God, which has for a long time past called him to a religious state. I assure you I enjoy his happiness, as well as that of those who dedicate themselves to God, by renouncing the world with all its enjoyments; which, altho' *so much valued*, are in reality *contemptible*, because they are not *eternal*. In retirement a Christian is best enabled to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, and to fulfil the promises he made in baptism of renouncing the world, and living only for God, who hath adopted us for his children. God however is little thought on by the generality of his children: the obligations which the name of Christian imposes on them are disregarded. Provided they live in honours and pleasures they are satisfied, and solicitous for nothing else."

The spirit of recollection, by which he resisted the violence and continued attacks of the spirit of dissipation and pleasure, gave him a constant relish for the things of God, and filled his soul with the most tender sentiments of divine love. His fervour seemed to increase with his years, as he daily advanced from virtue to virtue, and was never satisfied with the degree of perfection to which he had already attained, but always aspired after the higher gifts. The dedication of all his actions to the honour and glory of God, would never satisfy him, unless accompanied by the spirit of penance: hence, although he always cheerfully submitted to interior trials, and thanked God for the contradictions and sufferings he endured, to this he nevertheless added the mortification of all his senses, and the virtue of self-denial, which he carried to a pious excess. Having considered his body as the most dangerous enemy of his soul, he treated it as such; and therefore, instead of granting the least indulgence to his sensual appetite, it was with the utmost regret he allowed it the most indispensable necessities. At all times of the year he rose early, and at half past four o'clock during the time of vacation. Being ever occupied about something useful, duty became his motive for study, and necessity alone for recreation. At his father's table, (and the table of a minister is always sumptuously covered) he discreetly followed the severest rules of temperance and sobriety, never asking for any particular dish, nor refusing any that was offered, but generally eating of what was

the least grateful to the palate : " and this," says Flamanville, " he did so simply and unaffectedly, that if I had not been in the secret, I should never have remarked it when I dined in his company. This spirit of mortification, and these precautions to conceal it, extended not only to his meals, but to all his actions. I have observed it even in the most trivial things, for I made it almost my study to examine his conduct in every particular, not so much, I confess, with the desire of imitating him, as through curiosity to learn the whole extent of his piety."

The inclemencies, rigours, and changes of the seasons, he bore, not merely with patience and resignation, but even with joy ; appearing insensible as well to the most intense heat as to the severest cold. Whilst alone in his study, he never warmed himself, however rigorous the season ; and in company, without affectation, but apparently through politeness to others, he chose for himself the place most remote from the fire. Every opportunity of suffering became to him a subject of joy, and as it afforded to him the means of being made more conformable to the *Divine Model* of Christians : and Lent, being in a particular manner consecrated to penance, was his favourite season of the year. Although his youth did not permit him to observe the strict laws which the Church imposes on the faithful at that holy time, he however observed them in part, and as far as he could obtain permission. When he considered how little the generality of the people of the world availed themselves of the means of

salvation, which the penitential time of Lent afforded them, he expressed his grief and astonishment in the following terms in a letter to Xili: "The time of penance, my dear friend, is at length arrived: but, alas! is the great affair of salvation attended to in Paris, with more solicitude on that account? Do we witness less extravagancies? is the voice of Jesus more attended to? are there not at the very moment I am writing these lines multitudes preparing themselves for the opera, or comedy, or some party of pleasure? Does the venerable sacrament attract such crowds to the churches as the actors draw to the theatres? Is this, my friend, the way of doing penance, or entering into the views of the Church at this holy season?"

Sousi seldom entertained himself with his virtuous friends, without enlarging on the advantages of mortification, and proposing to them the exercise of some small act of self-denial. He would frequently advise them to accept in the spirit of penance, and with thanksgiving, the pains and afflictions imposed on them by providence, and particularly the most disagreeable and laborious part of the duties of their state. "The contradictions which you experience," says he, writing to the Abbé de Flamanville, "are undoubtedly mortifying: but it is a great consolation to be exposed to the same sufferings as our divine Master experienced. This is an opportunity of acquiring merit, which I am convinced you will not suffer to escape." In a letter to Xili he writes thus: "It will contribute much to our spiritual advance-

ment, if we mortify our senses in something every day: for example, our eyes by refusing to look with complacency on agreeable objects—our feet by not making useless visits—and our tongue by not speaking without a reasonable necessity of breaking silence.” His spirit of mortification was beyond conception ; “and I am persuaded,” says the Abbé de Flamanville, “that it was his ultimate wish that all his senses should be incessantly engaged either in speaking of God, or suffering for his love.”

It was undoubtedly a most edifying as well as uncommon spectacle to behold (not in a seminary, but in the midst of the gay world) a youth of seventeen, of distinguished family in the highest employments of the state, whose amiable qualities both of body and mind, was calculated to attract universal respect and esteem; it was, I say, an edifying spectacle, to see a young man of this description practice austerities, the exercise of which would have startled even pious men who had devoted themselves to a penitential state of life. I do not here allude to the sacrifices of obedience—application to study—assiduity in prayer—frequentation of the sacraments—temperance at meals—watchfulness, as well over the bodily senses as over the motions of the heart—the practice of these various duties of a christian life, which to so many young men appear insupportable, were considered by *Sousi* as insufficient to sanctify the life of a disciple of the crucified Jesus; and reckoning the religious exercises, which piety and habit had rendered easy, as nothing, he had re-

course to austerities of a more severe description. The time of vacation which students in general spend in the greatest dissipation, if not in a total neglect of every religious duty, was the time which he particularly set apart for the purpose of imprinting on his body the marks of the sufferings of Jesus; and the Forest of Joui, the scene of the pious severities which he inflicted on himself, frequently exhibited a spectacle, which heaven could not view with indifference. There it was that he did penance for the least *involuntary fault* with more rigour than most young men generally do for the *greatest crimes*. The following account is related by Flamanville.

“As I was one day walking with him at Joui, down what is called the *Vine-walk*, he departed from me suddenly without any apparent reason, and went into the wood. On another occasion, when we were near the same spot, he did the same. This made me suspect he had some particular motive, and I was therefore resolved to discover it. Accordingly after we had returned to the abbey, I returned back alone to the place, entered the wood, and advanced to the spot where I supposed he had been; I there found a holly, with some branches lying by it tinged with blood. I mentioned my discovery the first time that I had an opportunity of speaking to him: he did not endeavour to conceal it, but candidly acknowledged the severe penance which he had that day inflicted on himself, and added: “Alas! my dear friend, my levity is inconceivable, a fly distracts me, a nothing makes me laugh even before the altar of my

God, when I ought to be more particularly attentive to his presence." The fact was, that he could not refrain from smiling in the church, at a very laughable occurrence which had excited the risibility of all the religious. From that time I observed him with more attention than ever, and I perceived that sometimes in our walks he picked up a holly leaf, as if it were by chance and for amusement, as another would pluck a flower, and that he pressed his hand together till the points entered his flesh; and tinged it with blood. At other times he thrust them up his sleeves, and sometimes next to the bare skin. I once surprised him in the very act of this severe penance, but he coolly answered, "the religious, who wear no linen, have great advantage over us; they are less exposed to vanity." From this I collected, that he had punished himself for some involuntary thought of complacency on account of the fine linen which he was obliged to wear."

After the Abbé de Flamanville had discovered the secret of his friend's austerities, *Sousi* made no further mystery of it: he sometimes spoke of it in his letters under disguised terms, and as if speaking of something agreeable, exactly as any other person would speak of his amusements; this induces a suspicion that the Abbe was not only in the secret, but was likewise habituated to the same austerities. *Sousi*, in many parts of his correspondence with his friend, regrets his absence from *Joui*, and his inability to frequent the *Vine-walk*, which we mentioned above. In another letter to the same, he says, "On our re-

turn from Fontainebleau we spent two days with Madam d'Argouges: there I discovered something preferable even to the holy: and I should have settled my affairs pretty well in that delightful country, diversified with rocks and caverns, if our stay had been longer." Madam d'Argouges who was his sister, and what he there discovered, which he judged preferable to *holly* for the purpose which he intended, was the *juniper tree*.

The Abbé de Flamanville moreover relates, not as an eye-witness but on the authority of others, that during his residence at Joui, he frequently scattered holly leaves in his bed, and slept on them.

Although this pious young man seemed to redouble his austerities during the vacations, he nevertheless at other times chastised his body by very severe acts of penance. These however he concealed under the closest veil of secrecy: "but the walls of his chambers," says the Abbé de Flamanville, "bore testimony to the pious severities which he exercised on himself." Having procured several instruments of penance, his director forbade him to make use of them. Obedience to this injunction was a great sacrifice: he imparted this secret in confidence to his friend Flamanville, and added; "I am very apprehensive that Mr. Polot, by tying up my hands in this world, is reserving for me tenfold suffering in the next." It was likewise the pious custom of *Sousi* to offer himself frequently to God as a victim of expiation for the sins which he witnessed in others, and thus do penance without any demerits of his own, for those young men, whose demerits are great, and whose acts of penance are few.

By these and such like wonderful efforts of zeal and fervour, he endeavoured to form in himself the perfect man delineated by St. Paul; and to prepare daily the great account which he would have to render to God of the years of his youth, and of the grace which had been intrusted to him. During his year of philosophy, the last of his life, he seemed to hail the near approach of his crown, if I may be allowed the expression, as if he had had a foresight of his impending dissolution, and he redoubled his desire to obtain a speedy possession of it. Nothing now on earth engaged his affections; every motion of his heart was directed to God; he sighed only for his God; he spoke of nothing but his God; in a word, his conversation was in heaven. The letters which he wrote at this time to his friends breathe more tenderly than ever, the sentiments of a soul strongly penetrated with great truths of eternity, and with the necessity of labouring in earnest for salvation: a few extracts perhaps may not be unacceptable to the pious reader.

"With reason, my dear friend," he writes to the Abbé de Flamanville, "we may tremble for the future lot of those worldly-minded people who consider every thing that is done for salvation as an act of weakness and folly. There is every reason to apprehend that at the last day they will be forced to acknowledge that they alone were guilty of folly, and to pronounce against themselves those words which are sometimes read in the Epistle at Mass, *Nos insensati vitam illorum estimabamus insaniam: we fools!*

esteemed their lives madness. What will be their surprise and astonishment to see those very people enter into eternal glory, on whom they looked down with such contempt on earth! what confusion will they experience on that dreadful day, who have treated as folly the mortifications, fasts, and holy exercises of penance! who have pretended to associate Jesus Christ with the world, the pleasures of the body with the salvation of their souls! what a beam of light will then burst upon the souls of these unhappy men! but this dreadful light will serve only to display in more dismal colours, that never-ending despair which they shall endure, for having basely submitted to the demon of deceit, and for taking pleasure in his delusions. The term to which all sinners are hastening ought to fill us with alarm; it should incite us to meditate on death, and to watch over and mortify our sensual appetites. These my good friend, are the reflections which occupied my thoughts during my attendance at the king's mass in the midst of a very disedifying assembly of people."

But of all the great truths calculated to excite in the soul a constant attention to her duties, none is more effectual, or to which *Sousi* more particularly applied, than the meditation on death. He willingly attended to every thing that could remind him of it. The death which he himself witnessed, or of which he was informed by others and particularly sudden and extraordinary deaths, were to him a source of pious reflections which he loved to communicate to his virtuous friends.

“You no doubt have heard;” he writes to Xili, “of the sudden death of Mr. de Bellievre. This awful example ought to teach us not to fix our affections on the things of this world. God alone is worthy of our love: for death will soon snatch out of our hands every thing that we possess. If we meditate at leisure on that dreadful day when we shall be summoned out of this world to appear before the tribunal of God, and required to give an account of every action of our life, our affections may be easily disengaged from earthly objects, and more intimately fixed on Jesus; then we shall readily take him for our model, and, like him, lead a poor, humble, and mortified life. These things seldom occupy the thoughts of worldly people, but *now* less than ever, since luxury, profusion, and vanity, are carried to the highest extreme.”

On another occasion he remarked in a letter to the same: “The queen died on Friday, between two and three o’clock in the afternoon; the theatres are ordered to be shut, and a grand mourning will take place: but I am afraid that ~~this~~ change of dress, will not effect a change of ~~moral~~ morals, particularly as we see people of the world indulge their vanity in mourning, as much as in any other dress.”

“My dear friend, the time allotted for our preparation for heaven is not too long: the God whom we serve is entitled to our homage every instant of our lives. The day of our death is uncertain, therefore we ought to be always prepared. Perhaps it is not far distant; and how dreadful

will be our lot, if at that moment we are not found watching.

In another part of his correspondence with Flamanville, he writes thus : " My dear friend, I think you will not be displeased if I relate to you the train of thought into which I was led yesterday evening. As I was reflecting on the vanity of all worldly things, and how unworthy of our affections is all that passes with time when compared with eternity, I said to myself : no reasonable man should think of decorating a house in a magnificent manner which he holds only for a very short term, and from which he daily expects to be ejected; but we are, as it were, the tenants of the world, and God is the proprietor ; why then should not the tenants of the world be as prudent as the tenants of the house above-mentioned ? Ah ! happy would they be if the case was not quite the reverse. They overburthen themselves with solicitude and care, they labour and toil in order to obtain proper accommodations and comforts in this their worldly habitation, it is their ambition to furnish it magnificently, viz. to possess honour, riches, and pleasures; they live as if they were always to continue in possession ; and never once reflect, that perhaps to-morrow they will receive notice that their term is expired, and that they will be obliged to quit. Alas ! my dear friend, if in lieu of all this solicitude and anxiety, if instead of exhausting our treasures in comfortably settling ourselves in these hired lodgings, we were to seek out a more convenient habitation, and purchase the fee simple, we then should

not be left destitute of a home and without resource when the Great Proprietor of the world shall give us notice to quit this our earthly dwelling.

"How many of our fellow mortals and particularly young men of our time of life, are there, who, on account of their over attachment to the pleasures and goods of this world, neglect the opportunity of providing for the goods of eternity, and suffer it to slip out of their hands for ever. This consideration, I think, ought to induce us to labour indefatigably during the time of our earthly pilgrimage, to insure the possession of eternity, as our only proper abode, for which alone we were created;—these were my reflections; you may improve upon them as you please.

"Do not forget me, my dear friend, during Holy Week: it is my greatest desire to spend it in the best manner possible, for who knows but the approaching Easter may be the last that I shall ever see?"—This in fact happened to be the case; for a very few days after he wrote the above quoted letter, he was seized with a temporary loss of speech, and from this may be dated the commencement of the illness which brought him to the grave. His father immediately recalled him from college, and he continued to reside at home, although his complaint was attended with nothing more than a slight indisposition.

On Tuesday in Holy Week, whilst attending evening prayers with the family, he was seized with a spitting of blood; the greatest alarm was immediately visible on every countenance except

his own. So great was his dread of losing his ~~state~~ in this world, that he considered it more as a particular favour of Providence to die in the flower of youth, than as a subject of grief. The spitting of blood continued with increased violence the following days, without creating in him the least signs of uneasiness. He frequently said, that it was the will of God that this illness should befall him; this thought was continually in his mind, and therefore he was always resigned and content. Being prevented from satisfying his devotions in the church during Holy Week and the Easter holidays, he consoled himself with the reflection that his sufferings, united with those of his Saviour, and his conformity with the will of heaven, would supply for his non-attendance at the public service of the church.

His complaint being in some degree mitigated by a few bleedings, he made his Easter communion on the Friday in Easter week with a truly angelic fervour, and sentiments of extraordinary joy, not on account of the favourable appearance of his health, but because he was convinced that his convalescence would not be of long continuance, and that he should be ere long more intimately united to him whom he received in the sacrament of love. This sentiment he communicated to some of his confidential friends who comforted him.

He however for some time continued in such a favourable state, that hopes were entertained of his recovery. He had even resumed the greater part of his customary exercises. His time he divided between prayer and the study of philoso-

phical subjects, edifying the whole family by the fervour of his piety and his instructive conversation. He felt very few attacks of the fever, and these only after long intervals ; but was nevertheless obliged to keep his room, where he received the visits of his friends and acquaintances. On one occasion having received more visits than usual, and minute enquiries having been made by all concerning the state of his health ; turning to a friend he said, " Do you observe what are the customs and civilities of the world ? Not one has neglected to inquire about the state of my body, but with regard to the condition of my soul they seemed but little concerned ; since not a single enquiry on that subject has been made !"

On Wednesday night, June 23rd, the spitting of blood having returned with greater violence than ever, and his life appearing in imminent danger, he again testified the joy and readiness with which he submitted to the will of God. The hopes of being near the term of his dissolution filled his soul with delight, and spread a bright serenity over his countenance. Like St. Paul he considered *the loss of life a gain*, and he welcomed the approaches of death with the utmost ardour of his soul. His thoughts being solely intent on God, he sighed after the happiness of being united to him in heaven, and seemed to enjoy a foretaste of that ineffable felicity to which he was hastening. During the short intervals between his prayers, which were almost incessant, he either prayed or meditated, or asked a friend to read to him a chapter in some spiritual book.

The books which he preferred on these occasions were, *A Treatise on the Death of the Just*, the *Psalms of David*, the *Following of Christ*, and particularly the *twelfth chapter of the second book*, which treats on the necessity of suffering and carrying our cross.

Throughout the whole course of his illness, the last eight days of which were attended with excruciating pains, not the least word or gesture expressive of impatience, nor even of sadness or lowness of spirits, escaped him; he was satisfied with, and resigned to every thing; and regarding his physicians as the ministers of the designs of Providence over him, he obeyed them scrupulously till death. Without enquiring into the motives of their decisions, he submitted to every prescription. If ordered to abstain from what he most ardently longed for, he made no remonstrance; if to be let blood, he immediately presented his arm; if a nauseous draught were prescribed, he took it with demur. Although the quantity of drugs had palled his taste, without any apparent benefit arising from them, he never once complained of their nauseousness, nor even enquired how long he was to be harrassed by a repetition of them. If at any time he felt his pains more acute than ordinary, he addressed himself thus to God: "My God, grant me patience." This virtue he possessed in an eminent degree. It was impossible to be a witness to his sufferings, and the heroic sentiments wherewith he endured them, and not be struck with admiration.

One day his professor, by whom he was much

beloved, paid him a visit. Seeing him in violent agonies, and at the same time perfectly patient and resigned, he said, in a low voice, to a person near him: "What patience! what a lesson for us!" *Sousi* overheard him, but said nothing, being prevented at the moment by excessive pain. Regaining a little ease soon afterwards he turned to his professor and said: "Sir, when a person visits the sick, he ought to recollect that they hear very plain, and he should be careful not to expose them to vanity by commendations. The greatest service he can do them is to pray that God would grant them patience." He then spoke on various subjects with an unction that edified all that were present. The topic at length fell on the situation of professors, and of people devoted to the education of youth. "The profession," he said, "was as honourable and estimable in itself, as it was advantageous to society. It afforded many helps to salvation, but at the same time, it had its dangers: the greatest of which, he thought was, that it so closely applied the faculties of the mind to the study of the various sciences which were to form the education of their pupils, that it required the utmost precaution in order to prevent the unction of piety from being weakened." Whilst he was speaking his professor listened with such respectful attention, that a stranger might reasonably have supposed he was the scholar receiving a lesson from his master. *Sousi* having perceived it, he was confused: and reproached himself for the excellent reflection which he made, as an indiscretion; and thus addressed his professor:

"Pardon me, Sir, I entreat you ; it is not my province to speak of the duties of my masters, but the idea was occasioned by the recollection that the gentlemen of St. Sulpice spend an hour in prayer every morning in order to fortify their minds against that spirit of dissipation which generally attends the study of the higher branches of literature."

As it was the highest object of *Sousi's* desires to be united with his God, he earnestly requested leave, from the first day of his relapse, to receive the holy communion by way of viaticum : but his danger not being sufficiently apparent, they represented to him the propriety of waiting till a further change took place. Being ever submissive to the will of his superiors, he contented himself with making a voluntary offering of his soul to God, and renewing his fervour in the spiritual communions which he never failed to make at stated times in the day.

On Wednesday, the eve of the octave of Corpus Christi, the rector of St. Gervase, to which parish he belonged, came to visit him. The pious *Sousi* thought now was a favorable opportunity to renew the solicitations he had before made for receiving the holy viaticum. He spoke on the subject with so much unction and affecting piety, that neither the clergyman, nor any of the assistants, could refrain from tears. As it was thought advisable not to oppose his holy desires any longer, the rector promised to administer him the next day. Oh ! what a consolation was this to *Sousi* ! As he had very little difficulty in pre-

paring himself for confession, he did it with as little disquietude or perturbation, as if he were preparing for an ordinary communion.

The next day, being the octave of Corpus Christi, the rector attended with the holy viaticum. Every sentiment of piety which he had felt at his first communion, he displayed at this his last, but with a more eminent degree of fervour, as he was nearer the completion of his desires, and already dead to the earth. After he had communicated he seemed to experience the sweet transports of a soul drowned in the ocean of the Divinity, and secure of her eternal lot. The clergyman having asked him, before he took leave, what favours he wished him more particularly to pray to God for, he replied: "for resignation to his holy will, patience under my sufferings, and contrition for my sins." The assistants were particularly affected at these last words. They were afraid that the length of the ceremony had fatigued him, but he experienced a contrary effect: the abundant consolations which he received seemed to invigorate him with new strength; he felt less oppression all that day as well as the next. But this interval of ease flattered not his hopes of recovery; he employed it in acts of thanksgiving, and in preparing himself for the encounter of the last struggles of nature. They were, as we shall see, excruciating, and God, who intended to embellish his crown, and display in his person a model of patience for young men on the bed of sickness, visited him with severest trials.

On Friday night his fever returned with re-

doubled violence, accompanied with an incessant cough, which frequently stopped his breath. Whenever a respite of ease permitted him to articulate, he burst forth into acts of resignation: his usual words were, "My lord, thy will be done." Some pious women who were present, witnessing the extreme tortures which he endured, proposed among themselves to make a vow* under the invocation of St. Francis of Sales, *Sousi* having overheard them, said: "I hope that your vow will not have for its object my recovery: that is not what you must pray for, but rather that the will of God may be accomplished in me."

On Saturday the rector of St. Gervase paid him another visit, and asked how he found himself? Being at that time in great pain and very much depressed, he replied; "Do, Sir, pray that God would grant me patience: I stand in need likewise of very powerful reflections in order to be supported during my awful passage to eternity."

To the many sufferings which he endured, might be added another, which became the more insupportable as it was the only remedy, although constantly refused, that could give him ease; and this was a ravenous hunger, which tormented him to the last. "Let me entreat you, Sir," said he to his director, who was then sitting by his bedside, "to speak frequently of God; for unless my thoughts be fixed on his presence, I can-

*By a vow is meant in this place an engagement entered into before God, to recite particular prayers for so many days, to perform acts of penance, to bestow alms, or perform other good works, in order to obtain some particular favour; and it was frequently made under the patronage of some saint, in order to strengthen their suffrages by his intercession.--Trans.

not repress the desire of eating which incessantly torments me." Nevertheless, in the most raging fits of hunger he never once asked for food; faithful to the resolution which he had made at the commencement of his illness, of committing the care of his body to others, in order to direct his whole attention to the concerns of his soul.

On Monday morning, when a clergyman of his acquaintance paid him a visit, he described his state with the greatest composure, and added; "my good friend my last hour is approaching, let me entreat you not to leave me, you may be of great assistance to me at that moment." He repeated nearly the same words to another who came to visit him a few hours afterwards.

To every individual that came to see him he paid the most minute attention, by testifying his friendship for them, thanking them, and entreating them to remember him in their prayers. Having always expressed the most tender sentiments of affection and gratitude for his parents, he endeavoured to console them in their affliction at the prospect of his approaching dissolution, by declaring that he died without regret and that he left this world with pleasure.

Even to the last moment this charitable young man betrayed his solicitude for the poor whom he had always loved; but as if he feared to disclose the extent of his charity, he recommended *one only object* in particular, an *Irishman*, who on account of his extreme poverty had probably been introduced to him by Xili, and whom *Sousi* had supported for a considerable time. The compassion which he had for this distressed for-

eigner suggested to him the idea that perhaps he would be glad to see him. His friend having discovered his lodgings, introduced him into the room. The poor man, on beholding his young benefactor reduced to the last extremity, fell into an agony of grief—lost the powers of utterance—and tears alone testified the emotions of his soul. The humble *Sousi*, who could not believe that even he, who subsisted wholly by his charity, had reason to lament his death, treated his sensibility as a weakness, and thus addressed him in a firm tone of voice; “O man of little faith! was it then in creatures and not in God that you placed your confidence? Go, my friend, those sentiments are unworthy of a Christian.” He however requested his parents to take charge of him after his decease.

About three o'clock in the afternoon he experienced a more violent attack of the fever than ever, attended by an oppression of the lungs which scarcely permitted him to breathe. In this extremity he exclaimed: “Assist me, O my God! strengthen my patience, for it is almost exhausted.” As the fit continued for some time, and his sufferings became excessive, he entreated a friend to read aloud, but slowly, the Passion of our Lord, at the end of each verse of which he pronounced acts of resignation to the will of God, and offered up the sacrifice of his life to his Creator. When they came to that passage, *Could you not watch with me one hour?* applying to himself the reproof which our Saviour gave to his disciples, he repeated in an animated

tone, and with all the ardour of his soul, *what! could you not watch one hour with me?*

At seven in the evening *Sousi* asked if it were not time to administer Extreme Unction? They made some representations in order to engage him to defer it till the next morning; but he described the necessity of having recourse to that sacrament during the last assaults of death so pathetically, that they complied with his pious request. During its administration his piety gave the same edification to the assistants, and himself apparently experienced the same consolation, as when he received the holy viaticum. A short time afterwards they presented him a potion composed of drugs, and although the smell of it only was insupportable, he nevertheless drank it without the least reluctance or mark of repugnance, or even without rinsing his mouth after it. No sooner had he drank it than he experienced a violent hunger, accompanied by a burning thirst: being asked if he could endure it for a short time? although his mouth was inflamed, still eager to prolong his sufferings, he replied: "*Yes; I can endure it easily.*"

About midnight a fainting fit came on, and it was supposed by all that he was on the point of expiring. Seeing them eagerly crowding round his bed, he said: "I do not feel myself worse than usual, but perhaps my end is not the farther distant on that account." Then turning to a friend, who had continually advised him to take care of himself during his illness, and particularly to discontinue the austerities which he had

formerly practised, he said : "I hope you will acknowledge that if I had more seriously began to do penance when I was first taken ill, I should have been a little farther advanced than I am at present : " his friend refusing his assent, he exclaimed; "is it possible that people should persist in entertaining an opinion of me so opposite to truth."

When he opened his mouth to speak, his tongue appeared inflamed in the highest degree. A friend asked him if he would not like something to cool his mouth ? " Ask those gentlemen, and not me," replied he, turning to the physicians who were then present. Such was his answer at a time when his thirst was excessive, and his hunger voracious. Having agreed that a few spoonfuls of currant jelly might with safety be given him, he eat with avidity ; and although it was only like a drop of water thrown on a fire, he nevertheless asked for nothing more, and with alacrity offered up to God the sacrifice of his wants and sufferings.

Being convinced that this night would prove his last, he besought his director to remain with him in order to instil into his soul the sentiments proper for a dying person. Mr. Polot consented with pleasure, being particularly desirous to behold the last scenes of a life of such early and consummate piety. This virtuous clergyman was afterwards frequently heard to declare, that nothing had ever edified him so much as the last moments of *Sousi*. The people who came to see him, and the servants who waited on him,

* viewing him on his bed like a voluntary victim on the altar of his sacrifice, were frequently constrained to turn their faces aside, in order to wipe off the tears which such an affecting spectacle had so abundantly excited.

About two o'clock in the morning, an hour before his death, *Sousi* proposed to his director to take another general review, and make the last confession of the sins of his whole life. The pious young man, in the review of a life in which all around him had witnessed nothing but virtues, and actions worthy of praise, discovered, by the light of a lively faith, stains which called for the most bitter and lasting repentance. His sorrow manifested itself so much, even exteriorly, as to be heard by the assistants; and to judge from his lamentations, one would have supposed he had been a grievous sinner; their astonishment therefore must have been great, when they considered that his sorrow was occasioned by sins committed many years before, by faults, improperly denominated trifling, which most young people commit, either without reflection, or on which they never reflect with sentiments of real sorrow.

After he had made this his last confession, in order not to fatigue his director who had attended on him for a considerable time, he besought a brother of the Order of Charity to recite over him the prayers for the organizing, desiring him, at the same time, to read them in an audible voice, that he might hear and repeat the words after him. In obedience to his request they all knelt down, and while the tears streamed cop-

ously from every eye, he, with the greatest serenity and composure, united his voice with the prayers of the church, courageously exhorting his soul to go forth from this world, and testifying the most impatient desire of being united to his God. On this occasion, he gave the last proof of the profound respect which he had entertained during his whole life for the holy exercise of prayer: during the time that the recommendation of the departing soul was reciting, he happened to be in a very uneasy and painful posture; however he said nothing till the prayer was ended: being asked why he did not make known his situation sooner, he replied: "if I had, we must have interrupted the prayer."

Although so many exercises must have fatigued him, he nevertheless would not endeavour to compose himself, as he neither wanted nor expected repose till he found it in the embraces of his God. He again requested his director to address him as a dying person; "help me," said he, "to make acts of the principal virtues." Mr. Polot began to discourse on the excellence of the theological virtues, and suggested to him such sentiments on each, as best accorded with his present state. When Mr. Polot had ceased speaking, *Sousi* added an act of humility, and exclaimed: "O my God, how unworthy am I to appear before thee!" He retained the perfect use of his reason to his last breath. In proportion as he approached nearer the term when he should behold him face to face, his soul became more deeply penetrated with the idea of the ma-

jesty of God, and he dreaded to lose one instant of the time he could yet devote to his preparation before he was summoned to appear in his presence: in a word, it might be truly said, that his love was stronger than death.

At the time when he experienced the last pangs of agonizing nature, he begged that they would not permit him to doze: reproaching nature for the swoons into which he fell. "Assist me I entreat you," he would say to his director, "my head fails me—my imagination wanders, and I cannot apply my thoughts to God." A few moments afterwards, as if he experienced those sentiments of delight which God usually infuses into the soul of the dying saint, and dreading lest it might be a temptation of the devil; he rejected it, and cried out: "these are thoughts of vanity." About three o'clock he was heard to pronounce with a weak and dying voice, "*Lord Jesus receive my soul:*" having pronounced these words at different intervals, he pronounced in Latin, *Domine Jesu, suscipe spiritum meum*. He shortly afterwards surrendered his happy soul into the hands of his Creator.

Thus died the amiable and pious *Sousi* in the flower of his youth. Although he had only attained to his seventeenth year, yet he was ripe for heaven. In so short a space of time he had treasured up the merits of a long life. Every day was to him *a full day*; his premature death therefore, in the eyes of religion, ought not to excite any regret for the shortness of his life. In fact, no one seemed to lament that he died so

young : on the contrary, all envied his happiness, and regretted only their own loss in being deprived of the benefit of so bright an example. His lifeless body did not awaken those sensations which are generally excited by the sight of a dead corpse, on the contrary every one viewed it with such pleasure, and held it in such veneration as the sanctified temple of the Holy Ghost, that it was with the utmost regret suffered to be conveyed from the house to the place of its interment.

The whole family of *Sousi* bewailed his death; the grief of his father, in particular, was so excessive as to accompany him to the grave. This respectable old gentleman, whose life had exhibited a uniform scene of virtue, after the death of his beloved son, seemed continually to hear his voice calling him to a state of greater perfection. From that time it became his only solicitude to obtain leave to retire from public business, and having taken proper measures for that purpose, the king at length granted his request. The residue of his days he devoted to the contemplation of divine truths, and to the imitation of the virtues which he had witnessed in the life of his pious son. Every remaining year of his life he spent the whole lent in retirement, wholly intent on prayer and exercises of christian penance. His place of retreat was the convent of the Carthusians in Paris, where he had procured a small apartment. After the death of this minister, the following note was found among his papers. "Situating on the brink of the grave, my thoughts

shall be fixed incessantly on that dear child, who, even in the flower of youth, attained consummate sanctity."

The friends of *Sousi* bitterly lamented the loss of their beloved companion and instructor; and, if we may judge from the description which the Abbé de Flamanville has given of his own feelings, their grief must have been excessive. This young clergyman happened to be at Pont-Audemer in Normandy, when he received the first intelligence of his friend's death. Struck with the news as with a clap of thunder, every faculty of his soul being absorbed, he remained three hours bereft of his senses. He himself relates these particulars, and continues his recital in these terms. "Precious indeed was death to him, but to me it was afflicting beyond description; my heart was rent, and at the moment that I received the intelligence, I would with joy have restored him to life at the expense of my own. As soon as I returned to myself, and religion could come in to the aid of reason, I offered up the sacrifice to God; but at the same time I gave full scope to my tears:—I could not repress them:—my soul was overwhelmed with grief, and my grief was not without cause. Ah! I feel it again rushing like a torrent into my soul---it overpowers me---I cannot continue O my friend, I bless God for thy happiness, but sincerely pity those who have lost thee! O my friend, my only consolation is to think on thee! Methinks I behold thee still; not a night but thy image presents itself before me. If I were a limner, with what

correctness could I take thy likeness! O invaluable model, how sincerely do I wish to copy thy virtues, and instil them into the souls of others! Through excess of grief for the loss of thee, I seek my consolation at the foot of the cross, which I inherited from thee; there contemplating the sacred side of Jesus pierced for the love of us, I fancy myself kneeling by thy side, and that thou art contemplating it with me. At other times I seem to behold thee encircled with rays of ineffable glory in the heavenly Sion, and seated on the summit of eternal bliss, whilst thy friend remains far removed from thee in this valley of tears. But from the happy mansion where thou dwellest, I behold thee stretching out thy hands towards me. Yes, my friend, I have confidence in thy fraternal love; I will frequently invoke thy aid; I will conjure thee to intercede in heaven for him whom thou didst love on earth." It was thus that *Sousi* possessed the art of making friends. The love of virtuous souls is not like that of other men: piety makes them brothers; and the consanguinity of virtue, if I may be allowed the expression, has more sacred connections than that of blood.

The loss of *Sousi* was not only severely felt by his friends, but likewise in a proportionate degree by his fellow-students, and by every young man who had the happiness of his acquaintance. Virtue possesses this privilege among others, that it leaves a forced remembrance behind, which causes it to be regretted: and frequently the man who neither knew its value, nor experienced its

importunate monitories when present before him, is captivated with its charms when it has disappeared, and catches at it the moment it has slipped out of his hands. It was thus with one of the brothers of *Sousi*, viz. *Maurice*, that dissipated and thoughtless young man. The death of his brother, and bare recollection of his virtues, the sight of which had hitherto made so faint an impression on him, now wrought I might almost say a miraculous change. His conversion was the work of an instant, but it was perfect. His parents—his master—his fellow-students—knew him not again; he was no longer himself, he became another *Sousi*, he displayed his good qualities, he imitated his virtues, and the remainder of his life was, as it were, a continuation of the holy life of his brother.

CONCLUSION.

You have doubtless been edified, my dear reader, and your heart has melted at the recital of the virtues of this holy youth; but we can never be saved through the virtues of others: by our own works alone shall we be judged. Piety possesses in itself such powerful attractions, that a person must be depraved indeed not to be affected by it: but salvation is not attained by a vain and fruitless esteem of, but by the exercise

of piety. Not those who say, *Lord, Lord*, i. e. who are blest with the *gift of faith*, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but they who walk in the light of *that Divine Star*, and whose actions do not belie their faith. The example of *Sousi* makes virtue appear amiable in your eyes; you possess the gift of faith, but if you wish to save your soul, imitate his example, and copy his virtues. It may, perhaps, cost dear to flesh and blood; but reflect that heaven must be gained by violence, and that the violent only bear it away. An immortal crown is certainly worth purchasing at any price: at the same time, however, consider that the difficulty of living a truly christian life, does not consist so much in the actual exercise of christian virtue, as in a resolute beginning. A pusillanimous soul;—a young man without energy, who, enslaved by his passions, listens only to the suggestions of his own weakness, conceives an idea that the land of piety is a region of horror and misery, which devours its inhabitants; but let him take courage, let him explore the country, and the phantoms which scared his imagination having vanished, he will discover it to be a land of blessings, flowing with milk and honey, and blush at his former apprehensions. In order therefore, beloved reader, to imitate *Sousi*, the first step you should take, consists in a serious resolution to begin your journey, and a generous determination to tread in the paths he has beaten before you. You have it certainly in your power: and whilst his example invites you, your own conscience likewise, and even God himself im-

portunes you with solicitations. Enter therefore the gate that leads to happiness; and in order to support your tottering steps, study attentively again and again the encouraging model I have laid before you, and compare your own state with his.

From the moment that *Sousi* made his first communion, he rose superior to the weaknesses of youth, and exhibited an edifying picture of piety. At the age of thirteen, as has been already observed, he drew up a code of rules for his own conduct with a judgment that astonished every one, and the means which he took to persevere in the observance of them were effectual. The reason was, because he sought God in earnest, and God always showers down his blessings on such souls as sincerely seek him. You have probably already made your first communion many years ago; but did you endeavour, like *Sousi*, to impress on your mind a reverential awe for this great sacrament? Have you reaped the same fruits from it as he did? You at least formed good resolutions, and perhaps, like him, you even committed them to paper: but have your resolutions proved as effectual as his?—if they have not, to what cause do you ascribe their failure? Have the *great truths*, which so sensibly affected you when you had the happiness for the first time to receive your God, ceased to be *such*, or are they of less importance now than they then were? Which can be accused of folly, *Sousi* by his perseverance, or you by giving up the cause? At the time of our first commu-

nion the Spirit of God generally enlightens the soul, and inspires her with holy desires; the sentiments that a young man then feels, he ought undoubtedly continue to feel during the remainder of his life: and if at any time he perceive the least diminution of them, he ought immediately to take the alarm, and say to himself: "My soul is ill; I must hasten to restore her to health."

The most favourite occupations of *Sousi* were in thinking of God—conversing with God—in meditating continually on the law of God—and in reading pious books. From these sources he derived all his wisdom, spiritual consolation, and christian fortitude. Every thing around him seemed to whisper the tenderest accents of piety to his soul, and every creature to unite their voices in praising the common Creator. Ought not then every young Christian to entertain and encourage similar sentiments? If he do not—if, on the contrary, he converts the creatures, and the other blessings of God into weapons of offence against the Almighty Giver, he behaves, not like a son to his father, he inherits not the spirit of a Christian, much less an ecclesiastical spirit, which is the basis of true piety.

Inflamed with an ardent zeal for the honour and glory of God, *Sousi* could not see him forgotten and frequently offended without feeling the most poignant sensations of grief. Every power which a young man could possess were exerted for the promoting his greater glory. He incessantly lifted up his hands to heaven in fervent supplications for the good of religion, it

being his earnest desire to behold its reign established on the ruins of impiety over the whole earth: and his powers being too weak to permit him to do for God all that his zeal suggested, he endeavoured in some measure to supply the deficiency of religion in others by an increase of his own fervour and piety. Can you flatter yourself then, O reader, that you love God as he ought to be loved, whilst you entertain not in your breast these sentiments of *Sousi*? or, can you entertain them without occasionally manifesting them exteriorly?

The zeal of *Sousi* for the glory of God included likewise a zeal for the salvation of souls. We have already seen what ingenious plans he devised for promoting that desirable end. His charity was all in all, in order to gain all, and his only motive in endeavouring to gain the affections of others was, that he might win them to God. For this reason his piety, even in its greatest fervour, was uniformly decked in the most engaging dress: and whilst its austerity was reserved for himself, its sweets and beauties only were exhibited to others. His society and acquaintance was captivating and enchanting: being ever mild and complaisant, as well to his fellow-students as to all with whom he had any connection: he resented nothing, but sacrificed every thing to their desires, except duty and conscience, being satisfied, if at such a price he could engage them to attend to the voice of wisdom. Such being his behaviour to others, it was impossible to frequent his society without loving him, nor

to love him without wishing to resemble him. If a person were not pious when he first formed an intimacy with *Sousi*, he was in a manner necessitated to become so, before any considerable time had elapsed. You have already seen what were the general topics of his conversation—what the subjects of his epistolary correspondence—what his exhortations and counsel—and *particularly*—what example he continually exhibited before their eyes. In their company he behaved with singular modesty. Although he was in every respect calculated to be, and in fact was their instructor, he nevertheless considered himself as their disciple. By paying the greatest deference to their counsels, he infused his own into their breast; and by being obsequious on all occasions to their will, he obtained the command over their heart. Such is the nature of true friendship: the glory of God is the only motive in view:—piety is its sacred bond, and the mutual sanctification of the parties is the happy fruit. Now, beloved reader, as the friendships you contract in youth generally continue through life, you see of what consequence it is that you select virtuous friends. For where will you find a true friend, if a pious young man be not the object of your choice? Was a base flatterer ever a friend? Is the seducer, or the profligate, deserving of that sacred title? Would you confer the name of *friendship* on such unhappy connections as are frequently more to be dreaded by those who contract them than the most determined hatred?

The heart of *Sousi* melted over the distresses of every fellow-creature; and the most abandoned and wretched were the objects of his particular solicitude. Few young men of his age had more money at their private disposal than he, and none ever spent less in amusements. As parsimonious to himself as he was liberal to the poor, he would have scrupled to spend half-a-crown on a party of pleasure with his friends, whilst he thought nothing of giving fifteen shillings at one time to a poor woman.—You applaud these sentiments, my dear reader; but why are they not the sentiments of all young men in easy circumstances? After Providence has supplied you abundantly with every necessary both for food and cloathing, ought not the overplus to become the patrimony of the poor? Your wants are not only supplied, but you are provided with money for your private pleasures: let me ask you, therefore, ought not the necessities of the indigent, who are your brethren, to be preferred to your private pleasures? Or rather, what pleasure can be more agreeable to a humane heart than that of giving bread to a brother famishing with hunger, or of cloathing the naked shivering with cold? Besides, can a christian soul receive greater consolation, than when he reflects that in the *persons* of the poor whom he has *relieved*, he has assisted and relieved *Christ himself*?

As the corporal wants of man are of inferior rank when put in competition with his spiritual necessities, the latter of course engaged the par-

ticular attention of *Sousi*. Never did he give an alms to a poor person, without putting this question to himself: "Perhaps his interior distress is much greater than the exterior which I behold;" and at the time he gave him relief, he endeavoured to enlighten his mind by short instructions: and in particular, he exhorted him to seek comfort in poverty, by a more earnest application to procure the goods of eternity. It is not required of all young men (more especially of those who are not called to the clerical state) that they should possess the same zeal for the salvation of souls as *Sousi*: they are under no obligation of collecting together poor children, as he did, or of purchasing, even with money, the pleasing opportunity of instilling into their breasts the love of God, and effective desires of salvation; but *Sousi* fulfilled not only the precepts, but even the counsels of charity. From fulfilling the precepts, no young man can be exempt. You are commanded, therefore, beloved reader, not to suffer a companion to continue in a state of spiritual blindness, if it be in your power to instruct him, nor to desert a friend whom you see evidently running to his own destruction: for this is the neighbour of whom it is said, that God has committed the charge to each of us. Can it be supposed that you possess sufficient charity, I will not say as a clergyman, but as a disciple of Jesus Christ, if this charity, the most urgent of all the divine precepts, impels you not to stretch forth a hand to prevent a brother from falling down the precipice; or, if he be fallen, to en-

deavour by some means at least to extricate him.

Again; what prudence, what discretion tempered even the most ardent zeal of *Sousi*. His first step was to regulate his own conduct, before he attempted to prescribe to others: he taught more by example than by words: he never exhorted others to the practice of any virtue of which he was not himself the model. Reflect, beloved reader, that there cannot be a more disgusting presumption, than for a young man to pretend to correct the faults of others, before he has begun to correct his own.

Sousi was a perfect model of obedience and submission to his parents and superiors: he not only fulfilled their injunctions, but studied their desires, and anticipated their commands. He knew that in obeying them, he obeyed God himself; he respected them as the visible angels to whose charge heaven had committed him. He expressed his tenderness for them, not by vain or childish caresses, but by an uninterrupted regularity, and continual supplications to the throne of mercy to obtain the graces necessary for salvation.—These sentiments are undoubtedly excellent and praise-worthy, but they are so natural to a truly pious soul, and to a generous and well-disposed mind, that it is more astonishing that any young man should be found in whom they do not exist, than that they should be entertained by the greater number.

We have seen *Sousi* apply himself to his school studies with the greatest alacrity and dili-

gence, and that he fulfilled them with the sole intention of pleasing God. This pure motive made his academical labours agreeable; and a young man of abilities cannot fail of making a rapid progress in learning when he studies with pleasure. Success however never inflated the heart of *Sousi*; his superior understanding forbade him to attribute to himself either the gift of God, or the grace by which he felt the necessity of applying them to the best advantage.—Happy is the young man who can make a virtue of necessity, and, in a short time, a pleasure of that labour, which is laid as a duty on all ages, ranks and conditions of men: for if it be true, that labour is a yoke imposed on all the children of Adam, it is no less certain that it weighs not equally heavy on all: to those who carry it willingly, it becomes light, but to those who drag it with reluctance, it is a heavy burthen indeed.

The most unequivocal proof of the genuine piety of *Sousi* was his *humility*. Modesty, the first fruit of this virtue, he possessed in so eminent a degree, that in every company he always chose the lowest place, where he sat in silence, being as equally adverse to display his talents as to claim attention by his rank:—more eager to receive, than to give instruction:—more disposed to listen to others, than to speak himself. To the exterior symmetry and beauty of his person, which attracted general attention, himself alone appeared insensible: and his friends were afraid to extol gracefulness of figure before a young man who admired only the superior qualities of

the soul: nor had he ever the weakness to attribute to himself any personal merit from the high rank of his family, their riches, or interest. We have also already observed his extraordinary surprise how any rational being could presume to prefer himself before others, because he wore finer clothes; or imagine his understanding to be superior, because his head was better drest. You will readily allow with me, beloved reader, that modesty, although graceful in every age, is particularly captivating in youth, and one of its brightest ornaments. By the prudent reserve which this amiable virtue imposes, it not only prevents all those humiliations which originate in pride, but also conciliates the esteem of every person of sense. Were you therefore to consult only your present interest, you should endeavour to cultivate so invaluable an accomplishment: for, supposing *modesty* possesses not the rank of a *christian virtue*, it would be at least a *social one*, and consequently serve as an easy step to advance a young man to universal esteem.

The humility of *Sousi* was remarkably particular in the precautions and wise measures which he adopted in order to insure his perseverance in virtue. The least shadow of danger alarmed him:—the least occasions of sin he avoided with the utmost precaution, being more solicitous to preserve his innocence unsullied, than the greater part of young men are to recover it after having had the misfortune to lose it by sin. Nothing alarmed him so much as the necessity of attending the gay circles of the world.

His rank, however, required his attendance, notwithstanding his reluctance; but his presence was merely corporal. He possessed strength of mind sufficient both to withdraw his attention from those frivolous and vain conversations which dissipate the mind, and to guard against its dangers, which have a tendency to enervate and corrupt the soul.—Can you suppose, beloved reader, that without using the precautions adopted by *Sousi*, or even, were it possible, still greater, you will be able to escape unhurt through the dangers that await you in the world?—Are you even apprised of these dangers?—Are you fully convinced of the risk to which your salvation is exposed from the unbounded licentiousness of the age in which we live?—Are you aware that perhaps even in the midst of your friends, you may see the sacred maxims of Jesus Christ contemned by the profane maxims of the world, and hear theatres and other places of diversion, so fatally calculated to accomplish the ruin of innocent souls, commended? If you frequent the society of young men of the world, are you sensible that your piety, although it be but small, and even insufficient, according to your own conviction, to work out your salvation, will nevertheless be termed extravagance, singularity, and scrupulosity?—Are you sensible that, in a short time, they will enter into conversation upon topics the most injurious to chastity; and express their astonishment, nay even pity you, if you have not, like them, read the most obscene books, whose contents they will analyze; and in

order to suppress, if possible, your too well-founded alarms, they will attempt to undermine your faith, by repeating with a confidence, which their heart belies, all the blasphemies which, in this age of infidelity, are impiously uttered against God and his holy law ?

If you mix in an indiscriminate company, and frequent the places of genteel and public resort, you will become a witness to scandals on every side : religion may perhaps be the topic of conversation, but by their general conduct you will soon perceive that religion is their least concern. The greatest danger however to which you will find yourself exposed, will be from persons professing themselves Catholics, but in whose conduct you will discover very little of the spirit of religion ; you will see them treat the precepts of the Church with contempt ;—pay no regard to fasting, and deem abstinence almost unnecessary. Are you then aware that amidst all these scandals, you cannot pretend to be more religious than others, without becoming the object of ridicule and criticism : every action will be sifted, and if any failing be discovered, your whole piety will be treated either as vain or hypocritical : your only shield can be, that *all-including assemblage* of imposing qualities which extort respect for virtue even from those who make profession of abusing it. Whether was *Sousi* therefore more to be blamed for dreading the world, or you for dreading it so little ? No—it is a certain truth, that you cannot resist the impetuous torrent of the maxims and customs of the world without

great and repeated efforts : a young man stands in need of all the fortitude of piety in order to be enabled to triumph over its imperious examples ; and *Sousi* acted wisely by preferring flight, which in this case is honourable and advantageous, to the risk of a combat, where victory is ever doubtful.

Of all the virtues that embellish the character of youth, there was none that *Sousi* more carefully endeavoured to preserve than chastity, which of all others is the most frail and delicate ; nay, it might be likewise said, the most important for a young man ; not that it is superior to those virtues which have God for their immediate object, but because it is their only support and security. In fact, provided you insure to me the purity of a young man, I will insure to you his religion and other virtues ; but if, on the contrary, you tell me that he has had the weakness to listen to the licentious discourse of a dissolute companion, be assured he has ceased to be chaste, nay, I will hazard the assertion, that no principle of piety remains in his soul. No :—nothing can be expected from so unhappy a youth but what is depraved, nothing but disgraceful falls and multiplied guilt. In vain will you look for the same good qualities which he once possessed ; they have vanished, they are now no more. In the days of his innocence he was, like *Sousi*, mild, good, and amiable—his whole exterior breathed candour and sincerity : but now, alas ! you will at one time behold him gloomy, restless and sad ; and at another, exhilarated and dissipated even

to excess. The most unblemished amusements formerly delighted his innocent soul, whilst nothing will now satisfy his depraved heart but criminal pleasures. Then he loved his masters, and was, in his turn, beloved by them; whilst now he not only dreads and avoids them, but has scarcely the confidence to look them fully in the face, suspecting that their eyes can penetrate his interior, and behold his criminal disorder; and sometimes he certainly is not mistaken. Heretofore he delighted in the society of the most virtuous, but now their presence is become disagreeable;—he avoids them as the austere censors of his own conduct, and in a short time, perhaps their piety will become the object of his irreligious derision. Formerly he delighted to join in pious conversation, and, as occasions offered, loved to deliver his own sentiments on heavenly things, when his pious and undefiled lips uttered with ecstasy the praises of God; but now his heart is become frozen in the presence of his Maker, his tongue is motionless even amidst the holy exercise of prayer. The *spirit*, alas! that possesses him, although eloquent in the cause of evil, may be justly compared to that of the *demon* expelled by our Saviour, *dumb* in the cause of virtue.

Perhaps, beloved reader, you may imagine that situated as you are in a regular family or college, where every thing invites you to a life of piety, you have little to fear; but were you even in the sanctuary of innocence—were you possessed of equal piety with *Sousi*, and, moreover, determined to offer up the vow of perpetual chastity to the

Lord—still I would presume to give you this wholesome advice, an advice which you cannot disregard without exposing the important virtue of chastity to the most imminent danger, viz. *labour to preserve it with the same solicitous attention as Sousi*. In vain would a man propose to avoid shipwreck, if he threw himself among the rocks; in vain would you persuade me, or even persuade yourself, “that you were resolved to be chaste.” I should think you were deceived, and in fact you are deceived, if you do not, like *Sousi*, consider application to study as an important duty;—if, like *Sousi*, you do not shun idleness even on the days allotted for recreation;—if you do not acquire a command over your sensual appetite, and observe the rules of temperance and sobriety. But what must be your condition, if you can smile at an impure insinuation?—if you can listen to indecent conversation, or fix your eyes on objects on which you cannot occupy your thoughts without sin? Would you have any great esteem for the piety of *Sousi*, if he avoided only the perusal of those obscene books which shock even the least delicate ears, and allowed himself the free use of books of romance and theatrical fiction, in which the poison is not only equal, but mixed up with greater art?—if, at the time that he entertained a just scruple of frequenting the theatres, he permitted his eyes to range without restraint on the indecencies of fashion, and the licentious productions of the statuary and painter?

So perfectly was *Sousi* on his guard against

idleness, that it would be difficult to determine at what time he was most occupied, whether during the time that the schools were open, or the vacations. The vacations, that dangerous time for young men, was the season in which he reaped an abundant harvest of good works. It was then that he devoted himself in a particular manner to the holy exercise of prayer and mortification of the senses ;—it was then he avoided, with greater caution, the dissipation of worldly society, and sought God in solitude at the Abbey of Joui; where, being absolute master of his time, he drew up a rule of conduct, whereby he dedicated every moment to some useful purpose. Happy, O how truly happy is that young man, who can employ himself at all times ! and happy you, my beloved reader, if, like *Sousi*, you are sensible that there are times wherein you may enjoy recreation, but none to indulge idleness. To be idle, and not be in danger of the most fatal consequences, is morally impossible. Sad experience teaches, that he who is the weakest in virtue, is generally the most presumptuous : for how many young men do we see, who, whilst situated at a distance from the danger, and aided by the succours of the church, have preserved their piety ; but no sooner had they yielded to idleness, during the vacations, than they unhappily lost the fruits of many years of vigilance and combats, and precipitated themselves into the deepest abyss of evils, because, presuming too much on themselves, they laboured not to avoid them.

Among the virtues we admire in *Sousi*, his

love of mortification and sufferings bears the marks of that heroism which the Holy Ghost instils into some privileged souls, without requiring it from Christians in general. To avoid therefore every excess in a work which is intended as a spotless mirror for all readers, I acknowledge that I do not include in the rule of life which I propose to them, all the austerities which *Sousi* had the resolution to practice. I do not assert, that it is their incumbent duty to punish their guilty flesh with the same severity as *Sousi* treated his innocent frame. However, if they intend to live like disciples of Jesus Christ, or hope to merit a place in heaven, although inferior to that of *Sousi*, they must indispensably lead a christian life, which is necessarily a life of penance. If they have not the resolution of *Sousi* to court mortifications, it is at least incumbent on them to suffer with resignation those which Providence imposes for their salvation. It is incumbent on them to submit to study, although it be disagreeable;—to rules, which keep them in subjection;—to exercises, which are contrary to their inclinations;—to reproofs, which are humiliating to nature;—and sometimes even to severities, which are painful and mortifying; it is incumbent on them, I say, to submit with the same cheerfulness and alacrity as if they heard the voice of God imposing these duties on them. What then ought we to think, I will not say of the piety, but of the religion of that young man, whose only solicitude consists in knowing how to procure the means of living at ease and comfort, and to flatter his inclina-

tions;—who thinks himself enslaved in a college or seminary, because he enjoys the liberty of doing only what is good;—who, sometimes, murmurs against the rules, and frequently against those who oblige him to observe them;—who always imagines that too much time is devoted to the acquisition of learning and the sanctification of the soul, and never enough to amusements and the gratification of his senses;—who can endure nothing from others, and expects that others should endure every thing from him;—who, in the extravagance of ill temper, is enraged against every thing that offends him, and sometimes even attempts to revenge himself on the very elements and inanimate things, if by their means he experiences any disagreeable sensation? Such a young man has certainly a difficult task to accomplish before he can walk in the footsteps of *Sousi*. Grace, however, is all-powerful; and the youth who discovers his own features in this picture, instead of yielding himself to despair, ought to reflect that the tenderness of the good Shepherd is particularly exerted in behalf of the lost sheep who returns to the fold.

We have seen that *Sousi* particularly applied his thoughts to meditation on the great truths of religion, and that he was afraid they were not implanted deep enough in his mind. The thoughts of death, and its eternal consequences, were so habitual in him, that he frequently cited himself in spirit before the tribunal of the Sovereign Judge; and notwithstanding the perfection of his piety, scarcely could he confide in actions of which God was to be the judge, or dare to

anticipate a sentence, of which, eternity was to be the consequence. *Sousi*, by thus recalling to mind his last end, did no more than follow the counsel which the Holy Ghost gives to all who desire to avoid sin. To him who has unfortunately lost his innocence, the same salutary counsel is likewise applicable; and I will not hesitate to declare my firm conviction, that the sinner who follows it will be converted. I would say to him in the first place, do, with a view to recover your lost *innocence*, what *Sousi* did in order to preserve *his* unsullied. In imitation of him, frequently place yourself in spirit on the brink of eternity;—examine, with him, its unfathomable abyss;—draw near, in imagination, to those torrents of delight which inebriate the elect in heaven during an endless eternity: take a view of those pools of fire and brimstone in which his enemies are for ever ingulphed in hell, and address these or the like words to yourself: “O heaven! thou art not prepared for the reprobate; ah! no, the sinner shall never enjoy thee: O devouring fire! thou art the proper element for sinners; and if I remain a sinner, I must inevitably become thy eternal prey. Perhaps tomorrow, perhaps this very night my soul will be demanded of me, and I shall enter upon the interminable career of infernal torments.” Yes, beloved reader, this thought has frequently been sufficient, and, if seriously meditated on, will always prove sufficient to change the most hardened sinner into a model of repentance.

Of all the exercises of piety, the holy communion was the subject of the greatest joy and

consolation to the heart of *Sousi*; for this reason, as we have seen above, he received it very frequently. Are you sensible, beloved reader, that if a person approach the holy state with the same fervour as *Sousi*, he cannot approach too often. Of all the means provided by religion for the support of our piety, none is so efficacious as the holy communion: it being, as it were, the summary of all the rest, as all the rest without it would be insufficient. Let me ask this question: who communicate with the best dispositions? Do they who communicate, seldom—who are not in the habit of frequently approaching the holy table, give the most edifying example in a house of education? Ah! no; scandals and transgressions alone can be expected from the young man who thus lives excommunicated, as it were, in the midst of the succours of religion, and in a house particularly designed to form him to piety.

The prudent *Sousi*, when he had attained to that important period, at which every young man ought to deliberate on the choice of a state of life, consulted the will of God, and by the most fervent prayers and communions besought him to point out the way in which he ought to walk in order to save his soul. But whilst he endeavoured to discover the will of God with respect to the *future*, he laboured in a particular manner to sanctify the *present* time; being convinced that the disposition, which best deserved to be favoured with the knowledge of the will of God, was to live habitually in the state of grace. Were this example of *Sousi* followed by youth in

general, the salvation of many young men would not be exposed to those great dangers, which are the inevitable consequences of immature decisions. Their vocation would come from heaven:—it would be their own choice:—it would be neither suggested by blind passions, nor dictated by interested parents:—the church of God would not have cause to lament the disorders which at present disturb the peace of society:—the most holy of all states would not be abused by the many who embrace it through worldly motives;—nor would the sacred doors of the sanctuary, which should be opened only to learning united with piety, be profaned by ignorance or avarice.

Having now laid the life of *Sousi* before my readers, I propose it as a model to young men of every description, whether laics or churchmen, for *Sousi* was a laic, and young men of every age and condition are called by our Saviour to the same state of christian perfection which he attained; with this only difference, that whilst the imitation of some particular traits in his character are of counsel only to laymen, they retain the nature of precepts with respect to ecclesiastics.

Notwithstanding this exemplary piety, *Sousi* died in the flower of youth; but death is not to be considered therefore an evil; *Sousi* ardently longed for it; and where is the young man who would not say, "*O may my death be like unto his.*" A happy death, my beloved reader, is the natural consequence of a good life. Although it be a great, nay, the greatest of blessings, still it is not the last that attends a life of piety. Nei-

ther the virtuous man who has edified his fellow-creatures by his good works, nor the libertine who has exhibited one continued scene of scandals and bad examples, is entirely lost to those who survive him : for, as the sinner continues, as it were, on earth in that unhappy chain of iniquities of which he was the first link, and is guilty of the crimes of others, whilst himself exists no more ; so the just man, likewise, survives his dissolution, but in a quite different manner ; for the treasure of his merits increasing in proportion to the recollection of his virtuous actions, his life is perpetuated in the memory of man, and becomes productive of fruit. Thus the good works of *Sousi*, so numerous in life, do not cease even in death. He indeed is no more, but the efficacy of his example still continues to subsist in all its vigour.

We no longer hear his voice, but his works do not remain silent ; they preach aloud from his grave, even after his bones are mouldered into dust. At this moment they sound in the ears of the virtuous young man, and exhort him to patience and perseverance ; and they thunder in the ears of the young sinner, in order to arouse and convert him : they preach to us all, by them was I myself inspired with confidence, that all my readers would be benefited by this description ; that one class of them would more ardently endeavour to complete the great work of salvation, which they had begun ; and that the other would feel regret that they had neglected it so long : *Defunctus adhuc loquitur.*

THE END.

INDEX.

DEDICATORY Epistle,	Page.
Introduction,	iii
	13

PART FIRST:

The birth of Sousi,	19
His happy dispositions in childhood,	22
Description of his person,	22
His preparation for his first communion,	23
His written resolutions,	25
Necessity of fulfilling the resolutions made at the first communion,	32
The fidelity of Sousi to his resolutions,	34
The benefits he received from his first visit to the Abbey of Joui,	36
His daily spiritual exercises,	38
His constant attention to the presence of God,	42
His pious reflections on various occurrences,	45
His aversion to moral evil, and its effects on his mind,	46
His pious conversation and correspondence,	48
His concern for the good of religion,	52
He prepares himself by repeated acts of self-denial in small things, for the more painful sacrifices which Providence might hereafter require of him,	55
He endeavours to increase his piety by numerous small exercises of devotion,	57
Principally by frequent communion,	59
His solicitude, and endeavours to discover the will of heaven respecting his vocation,	61

PART SECOND.

65

His affection for and obedience to his parents,	66
His respect and submission to his superiors,	68
His attention in school,	69
His respect for his director,	70
His behaviour towards his equals and inferiors,	71
His first acquaintance with Flammanville and Xili, and the happy effects of virtuous friendships,	73
His aversion to detraction,	74
His modesty,	85
His zeal and labours for the salvation of young men,	86
His respect for the clerical state,	91
His zeal for the salvation of poor children,	95
His charity and alms-deeds,	96
His love of poverty and contempt of riches,	98
His behaviour in company,	104
His sentiments on the world,	106

PART THIRD.

108

His application to study,	111
His application likewise to the science of salva- tion,	112
His meekness and humility,	113
His dread of honours and pomp,	115
His delight to be unknown,	119
His angelic chastity,	123
His occupations at the Abbey of Joui,	124
His penitential austerities,	132
His preparation for death,	140
His last illness, and death,	154
Conversion of his brother Maurice,	158
Conclusion,	158



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